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THE

MALABAR QUARTERLY REVIEW.

EDITED BY

K. N. SIVARAJAN, B. A.

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The Morality of the Ramayana.

BY MR. T. PONNAMBALAM PILLAI, M. R. A. S.

THE late lamented Professor Sundram Pillai of the Trivandrum College had, in the course of his extensive study and observation, formed definite opinions on matters connected with his country, but before he was able to give them out to the world, his life was cut short. The following are some of them, known only to a narrow circle of friends. They have been portrayed with Boswellian fidelity in Tamil and published posthumously * by Mr. V. P. Subarmanya Moodaliar, one of the Professor's admirers, and himself no mean thinker on social and other allied questions. I have taken the liberty to give to the substance an English garb.

It must be stated, at the outset, that the learned Professor had no faith in the authenticity of the story of the Ramayana. He was of opinion that it was meant to proclaim the prowess of the Aryans and represent their rivals and enemies, the Dravidians, who had attained a high degree of civilization at that period, in the worst possible colour. He offers this criticism taking for granted that the story is founded on facts.

The country, that lies between the Vindhya mountains and the northern limits of H. H. the Nizam's Dominions, was subject to the

* Vide *Tamilian Antiquary*, No. 2. A critical Review of the story of Ramayana, with an introduction by Mr. J. M. Nallasamy Pillai, B. A., B. L., another Dravidian Scholar and thinker.

rule of Ravana, the King of Ceylon, and his sister Surpanaka was in direct charge of it as his vicerine. The western portion of it was Janasthanam and the eastern portion Dandakaraniyam. The whole place was partly inhabited and partly filled with jungles. The country between this tract and the southern limits of Mysore was ruled by the Dravidian kings, Neelan and Bali. The peninsula further south was the Tamilagam or Tamil country ruled over by the three Tamil kings, Chera, Chola and Pandiya. Special mention is made by Valmiki of the last-mentioned prince. At this period the Aryans were settling themselves down in the unoccupied portions and their colonies were very few and had not extended to the towns.

The Sovereigns of these countries as well as of Ceylon were Dravidians or of Dravidian extraction. The high standard of morality set up by them and the perfection attained by them in most of the fine-arts are evident signs of the high civilization reached by them. The masterly account of the metropolis of Ravana and of the golden gate of the Pandian fort as given by Valmiki are more than flights of imagination.

Ravana is described as a monster with ten heads and twenty hands, approaching the Grecian Hydra. It has been conclusively proved by Palæontology that animals larger and mightier than elephants were once in existence. But remnants of Rakshathas as those described by Valmiki and his compeers have yet to be found out. It requires no effort to say that the existence of such a class of God's creatures was a myth and the account was made out that the Dravidians might look small in the eyes of posterity. For the same reason the name of Asurars was given to one set of Dravidians. Similarly individuals, belonging to the clan of which Bali, Sugriva and Hanuman were the leaders, were termed as monkeys. The Darwinian theory and the existence of the race of ourang-outang have not solved the problem started by the ancient Aryans.

The Devas were none but Aryans, opposed to Asurars and Rakshathas. The sages or Munies or Rishis were their priests that accompanied them during their hostile and aggressive march.

Ravana, one of the important characters in the Ramayana, was versed in the Vedas and was a staunch believer in Siva. The austere

penance performed by him was such as to shake even the very foundations of Mount Kailas. His proficiency in music was so great as even to move Siva. He was a renowned warrior and by his personal valour effected great conquests. He administered his Kingdom so well that internal peace was never disturbed. He was a dutiful son, father, husband and brother. He could always be relied upon and maintained the laws of war with honor. He treated his enemies with generosity, nay with magnanimity.

The other Dravidian princes, such as Bali and Neelan, were equally accomplished men and bore the highest character. They administered their kingdoms with characteristic justice and impartiality.

The charges against Ravana were

(1) That he defeated the celestials and imprisoned them,

(2) That he annoyed the sages while in the performance of their religious rites,

(3) That he abducted Sita, the wife of Rama.

As has already been pointed out, the Devas or celestials did not descend from the heavens, but were only the kith and kin of the Aryan trespassers. Their mission was not friendly and they were in quest of conquest. Ravana would therefore have been justified not only in retarding their progress, but also in carrying the campaign into the enemy's country or Deva Loga. He vanquished them in a fair fight and there is nothing unusual in imprisoning prisoners of war.

With regard to the molestation of the Sages, it has already been stated that they were the Vaidiks or priestly portion of the Aryan intruders. History has repeated itself over and over again. They were the missionaries that preceded the conquest of Dravida by the Aryans. While performing their religious rites or under that cloak they collected and communicated intelligence regarding the movements of the Dravidians to the enemies of the country. As long as they settled themselves down in Dravida, it was their duty to have conformed to its laws and proved loyal to established authority. They not only failed in their duty, but also proved treacherous. Ravana would therefore have been within his rights, to have put them to the sword, but as a pious devotee of Siva he would not take such an extreme step. He contented himself with

only molesting them in the performance of their religious rites, fully believing that they would retrace their steps and finally clear out of the country.

Under the articles of war there appears nothing unusual in the abduction of Sita. When Ravana, the all-powerful King of Ceylon, heard of the affront offered to his sister—one of the first ladies of the realm—he must naturally have been incensed at the ungallant and cowardly act of the polished brothers. It certainly demanded retribution. It is a right of warfare, to seize and carry away any member of the enemy's party, whether actively engaged in fighting or is found as a straggler. In one of the ancient books of moral precepts, it has been stated that it is the right of a victorious general to carry away the wife of the fallen rival. Ravana went with the object of demanding satisfaction, but in the absence of the brothers he had a free fight with one of their uncles and his horde and after vanquishing them, carried away Sita. It may be said that Ravana was unfair inasmuch as he caused Lakshmana to be decoyed from the place before he entered the presence of Sita. If he had done so, certainly it must have been unfair. But as the whole incident smacks of supernaturalism, it cannot be accepted. Again, Ravana was in his own dominions, when he heard of the treatment of his sister by Rama and Lakshmana, and he should therefore have advanced towards them with sufficient fighting force. As the insult offered was with impunity Ravana must naturally have thought that some latent force must have been at the back of the Aryan princes to support them. He should therefore have repaired to the scene with great caution and sufficiently armed. In these circumstances it was unnecessary for him to have allured away Lakshmana.

In treating his prisoner he was very considerate. When Sita was first seized he would not permit anybody to touch her person, but caused her to be carried with her seat. His further behaviour towards the Princess shows his magnanimity. When she was taken to Lanka she was housed in one of the most beautiful palaces situated in his ornamental garden where he used to repair for health and recreation. Her attendants were the select princesses from the royal family. Though he was passionately in love with Sita he only made overtures directly or indirectly and never thought of using brute

force as it was quite in his power to do so. Owing to the conduct of her husband and brother-in-law there were occasions when Ravana could have put her to death, particularly after learning that she would not yield to his wishes for anything under the sun. But his generosity and piety would not permit him to do anything of the kind.

What did the polished Aryan princes do in a similar situation? At the instance of Visvamitra Rama killed Tataka—the grandmother of Ravana—for annoying the priestly class. Again when his sister made love to the brothers passing no doubt all bounds of modesty (if the Aryan Chronicler is to be believed) they not only insulted her, but mutilated her features. This was no act of gallantry and Rama looked at the whole thing with an unconcerned eye without raising one word of disapproval at the conduct of his brother. Again according to the code of international law there was no declaration of war to warrant such a barbarity which is not heard of even in the crudest of ages. Rama and his brother were the most polished gentlemen of the age and it is an enigma how they perpetrated such an act of cruelty towards a helpless woman. This is in perfect contrast to the manner in which the so-called monster king behaved himself.

Next to the offences committed by Bali. As has already been pointed out he was the ruling prince of the country south of Dandakaranyam and the fact was so by right of primogeniture. During a temporary absence from his kingdom, on a pursuit of conquest he left his brother Sugriva in charge of it as his regent, but on his return he found his unnatural brother ambitious of becoming the King himself and proved refractory by refusing to hand over the reins of Government. Bali had to fight for regaining his Kingdom. The result was the defeat and exile of his brother Sugriva. In a similar situation any other person, take for example Arungazib, would have made an end of his brother that he might not give trouble again. But his brotherly feeling prevailed upon him to spare his life. The Aryans have found fault with Bali for all this, but no reasonable man will do so on the facts stated.

It has also been alleged that Bali took his brother's wife for himself. Even if the authority of the Aryan Chronicler is to be relied upon, the Code of warfare permitted such an act on the part

of a victorious enemy as has already been stated. But the partisan account has to be taken with caution. The Professor and his friend appear to think that Bali was generous enough not to molest the household of his erring brother and they chose to remain where they were without following Sugriva in his exile. It is also possible that the members of the family were detained as hostages for his good behaviour.

Before concluding this paper some reference may be made to some minor facts. The Professor and his friend are loud in their condemnation of the alliances formed between Rama and Sugriva, and Rama and Vibheeshana as unnatural and unbecoming of dignified, straightforward and gallant Kshatriyas. Here I would draw the special attention of the reader to the part played by Rama during the last and fatal battle that was fought between Bali and Sugriva. While it was raging, from his place of concealment Rama shot Bali dead. It is unnecessary to repeat that this cowardly conduct is not becoming a Kshatriya. There are stories of Kshatriyas wounded on the back, committing suicide ashamed of meeting their spouses in that condition, as it was considered that only cowards receive such wounds and not heroes who fight face to face. In that light the act of Rama was mean in the extreme and his only object was to secure an alliance at any cost.

Vibheeshana was a great coward in as much as he never took part in any of the battles that were fought between his brother's forces and those of Rama. His services were required by the latter only to ascertain the weak points of his enemy. In other words Rama relied more upon subterfuges than fair open fight which was the Dharma of the Kshatriyas according to Aryan ideas.

Now I have only to submit that in stating these facts the authority of Valmiki alone was relied upon and none else.

T. PONNAMBALAM PILLAY.

Hand-loom Weaving Factories in India.

By Mr. T. S. Balarama Aiyar, B. A.

THE idea of starting hand-loom weaving factories with improved hand-looms has been up in the air ever since the advent of the "Swadeshi movement." It has almost become a mania and has seized persons who are but mere enthusiasts and who have no idea of what *weaving* is. It is true that every patriotic Indian should try his level best to revive the once flourishing industries of India. But ours is a poor country and we cannot afford to lose a single pie in vain attempts to revive the dying and dead industries of our motherland.

In order that any enterprise should be successful, it is almost axiomatic that the organiser and promoter should have a clear view of the formidable difficulties that may have to be surmounted before the goal of success can be reached. In the nature of things, it is only one who is thoroughly acquainted with the practical as well as the theoretical sides of the question that can make an estimate of such difficulties. In this paper, among other things, I propose to make an attempt to point out the many difficulties that one may have to confront while on the way to bring a hand-loom weaving factory to success.

It is of melancholy interest to note that not very long ago, India was making clothes not only for her own use but all the big markets of the world were full to the brim with the products of the Indian hand-loom weaver. The Grecian historian Herodotus defines cotton as wool that grows on the trees of India. It was the hand-made fabric of India that was adorning the beauties of the courts of Rome and Athens. Not to dwell much upon the sad decay of this Industry, it is enough to note that to-day we are importing cotton-goods to the worth of not less than 32 million pounds. Imagine the fall! From an exporting country ours has become an importing country! Why! to-day India manufactures only one-third of the quantity of cotton cloths required for the use of her sons, the remaining being imported from European countries. To be more accurate, we import nearly 2700 millions of yards of cloth from Europe, our own manufacture amounting to 700 millions. Can anything be sadder than

this? Is anything else required to convince any lover of India about the urgent necessity of improving the industry of weaving?

The first question that is generally asked with reference to hand-loom weaving factories is whether they can compete with power-loom factories. I shall not attempt to answer this question at present, but shall do so in some future paper. I will just consider whether hand-loom weaving factories can be commercially successful.

Our hand-looms produce nearly twice as much cloth as our power-looms, and if with all its disadvantages, the primitive pit-loom of India has so long stood the test of competition with the European power-loom it goes without saying that improved hand-looms must be commercially successful.

But—this is a very important "but"—this is only in theory and in practice we find so many difficulties confronting us that it is not very safe to assert the commercial prosperity of hand-loom weaving factories. On the one hand, hand-loom weaving factories have to compete with the huge power-loom factories of Lancashire and on the other hand, there are the country weavers who, though working under many disadvantages, have many advantages over the "Hand-loom factories." First, the weaver has not to meet any establishment charges. He has not to pay for any manager, any clerk, any servant, he has not to pay any rent. Secondly, in calculating the selling price, he takes into account only his labour for which he does not charge more than four annas a day. Thirdly, he has got his wife and children to assist him for whose labour he charges very little. Thus the cottage weaver has no establishment charges to meet and he can command cheap labour. The cottage weaver possesses one more advantage over the factory weaver. This is in the matter of "sizing." The process of sizing is a very tedious and costly one for factory owners. For they have to pay for any work they exact from the workmen. But the cottage weavers help one another in the matter of "sizing". Thus we find that the cottage weaver is no mean foe to the factory owners.

A hand-loom weaving factory with improved hand-looms does not possess the advantage of speedy production of the power-loom factories, while it shares all its disadvantages though to a less extent. On the other hand, it possesses few advantages over the cottage

weaver while it labours under many disadvantages which the cottage weaver is not subject to.

We have so far considered in general terms the difficulties of a hand-loom weaving factory. We shall just try to work out the net profit which a hand-loom weaving factory may realise out of 10 bundles of 10 lbs. each of 20'S and compare the same with that of the cottage weaver.

Cost of 100 lbs. of 20'S (50 lbs. warp and 50 lbs. weft)	...Rs.	46	0	0
Cost of winding, warping and sizing and beaming	... „	13	2	0
Cost of weaving at 6 per yd.	... „	13	12	0
Total	... „	72	14	0

Or Rupees 73 approximately.

(It is assumed in the above figures that about 440 yards of ordinary plain cloth of about 45″ width can be woven out of 100 lbs. of 20 'S.)

Now the selling price of 100 lbs. of cloth at 3 annas per palam of 10 Rupees' weight is Rs. 77, which is Rs. 4 more than the cost price.

Now it requires nearly two months for a loom to weave 100 lbs. of yarn. Hence we can expect Rs. 2 per loom per mensem. We will take into consideration a factory with 50 looms. For 50 looms we can expect Rs. 100 a month. Out of these Rs. 100 must be met the interest on the capital and the establishment charges which worked in detail amount to Rs. 90 approximately thus:—

Superintendent	Rs. 25
Maistry	Rs. 12
Clerk	Rs. 7
2 Servants	Rs. 8
Interest on capital Rs. 7000 at 6 p.c.	Rs. 35
Total	Rs. 87

Or Rupees 90 approximately.

Thus the Proprietor gets only Rs. 10 per mensem out of his big factory of 50 looms. In other words, a hand-loom weaving factory consisting of 50 improved hand-looms and working on 20 'S pays the proprietor little more than 6 % interest on the investment. It is not

every weaving factory that can be expected to pay even this small interest on the investment. In many cases the cost of the preparatory process really exceeds the amount given in the figures.

In the above figures it has been assumed that the preparatory processes cost only Re. 1-5-0 per bundle. The cottage weaver is able to have these preparatory processes done for Re. 1-5-0 a bundle, or even for a less cost. But in factories we find that the preparatory processes cost nearly Re. 1-8-0 per bundle if not more in which case the proprietor cannot expect anything in the shape of interest on his investment. This is not a very encouraging state of affairs And it is but proper that the would-be organisers of Hand-loom weaving factories bear this well in mind. I beg to assure my beloved countrymen that the above figures are collected after careful experiments extending over months and one can easily see from the figures that it is not worth while investing money in hand-loom weaving factories under the existing circumstances.

It may very well be asked whether by changing the count of the twist and whether by working on coloured threads and whether by weaving such clothes in which there is no competition either from power-looms or from pit-looms, hand-loom weaving factories cannot be made a success. An absolute monosyllabic answer cannot be given to this question. It depends upon demand and adjustment to the demand. The weaving factory in Tondiarpet, Madras, is working mostly on what are called "Madras Handkerchiefs." These handkerchiefs require close beating and the primitive hand-loom weaver finds it difficult to put in so many number of picks per inch and the result is there is no competition from the local weavers. There is again the Basel Mission weaving establishments which manufacture all sorts of fancy checks, towels, bed sheets &c. For the reason stated above, the cottage weavers cannot compete with the mission establishment. But unfortunately handkerchiefs and checks have necessarily a limited demand and it goes without saying that the general demand of the Indian Public can not be met by such factories.

So then the problem that ought to be considered seriously is this :—Whether a hand-loom weaving factory working on clothes for the general use of the people can be commercially successful-

'Kanji' and wind it on to big bobbins of not less than 18 inches in circumference.

Fifthly, rewind it on the bobbin to be placed on the crul. In this process a vessel with thick size is placed between the bobbin referred to in the fourth process and the crul-bobbin. There is a small roller underneath the 'size' and the yarn is taken through this size underneath the roller. Between the vessel of size and the crul-bobbin are placed 4 brushes with their faces up and down alternately and the yarn is taken over the faces of these brushes and pressed between the thumb and the fore-finger and wound on to the crul-bobbin.

Then comes warping. This is done on an automatic warping machine which turns out twice as much work as the ordinary warping machine. The warp is taken out and spread as for ordinary sizing. Thick size with oil mixed to it is lightly applied over the warp. We shall consider the charges of the above process of sizing.

1st operation	costs,	say,	Rs. 0	1	0	per bundle
2nd	,,	,,	nothing			
3rd	,,	,,	costs 0	1	0	,,
4th	,,	,,	,, 0	5	0	,,
5th	,,	,,	,, 0	4	4	,,
Warping costs			0	2	6	,,
Oiling and beaming			0	2	8	,,
			Total Re. 1	0	6	

If the work is carried on a large scale the charges under items 1, 3 and 5 could be reduced.

If the preparatory processes can be done for the above sum of Re. 1—0—6 per bundle of 10 lbs., I have no hesitation to say that Handloom weaving factories shall be commercially successful. But the process suggested above is not without its own drawbacks and I have only pointed out here in general terms the lines upon which I am experimenting.

I must not fail to observe here that the process suggested above is different from the process suggested by me in my paper on 'the preparation of warp' submitted to the Industrial Conference held in Madras in connection with the All-India Weaving Competition.

To sum up, I am of opinion—and this opinion is based on actual facts and figures—that until and unless some means are discovered whereby the preparation of warp can be cheapened, hand-loom weaving factories working on ordinary plain clothes to the demand of the general public cannot be a success. I am aware that there are at present many intelligent sons of the soil directing their inventive faculties towards manufacturing automatic looms and to them I would say "My dear brethren! try to invent means to cheapen the process of the preparation of warp and you would have solved the famine problem of India."

Before concluding I must say a word about the 'size' and the looms that I use in my factory, the Pushpagiri weaving factory, Trichur. The size is prepared out of what are known as 'sizing onions,' a wild species of onions which grows in the forest of Malabar in abundance. For the mode of preparation please refer to my paper on "the preparation of warp" published in the report of the Industrial Conference held in Madras in connection with the All-India Weaving Competition.

There are three sorts of looms in use in my factory. (1) The Japanese loom, (2) the ordinary fly-shuttle loom used by the Government weaving factory in Salem, and (3) the Pit-loom with fly-shuttle slays fitted up. The Japanese loom works satisfactorily up to counts 30'S. Good selvages, uniformity of picking and neat appearance are some of the attractive features of the Japanese loom. The out-turn is nearly $1\frac{1}{4}$ times that of the ordinary fly-shuttle loom and on the whole my idea about the Japanese loom is that it can be given a place in a factory where there are a number of fly-shuttle looms.

The frame looms are more convenient than the 'pit-loom with fly-shuttle slays-fitted up.' But the latter are cheaper and the professional weaver takes a liking to it. In other ways there is no difference between them.

Warping is done by means of an automatic warping machine which is worked by a boy of 10 years.

We have seen from the above lines that the weaving industry of our country has sadly decayed. We have seen that herculean efforts are necessary to revive this industry. We have seen that every year a big sum of 32 million pounds is sent out of our poor

country to purchase clothes and we sincerely entertain the opinion that if the output of our looms can be increased in value by 32 million pounds many a poor Indian that is fasting from year's end to year's end can enjoy a hearty meal every day. We have also seen that we have to confront formidable foes in the field. But necessity is the mother of invention. God willing, we are determined to work out our own salvation. We sincerely entertain the hope that ere long we will find out means to weave in our own looms the major quantity of cloth required for our daily use and in this pious undertaking we do expect to enlist the sympathy of man and God.

T. S. BALARAMA AIYAR.

Akbar and Agra. (Side-lights of History.)

By Mr. M. A. Williamson.

I join the above names advisedly; to separate them seems well-nigh impossible. Like the famous Siamese twins or like Castor and Pollux they should go together. To speak of Akbar without alluding to Agra, or, *vice versa*, is akin to acting *Hamlet* without Hamlet, or, *the Merchant of Venice* without Portia. I shall therefore give a succinct account of both.

It is recorded of Henry VIII's daughter, Queen Mary of England who married Phillip of Spain, that being neglected by her husband, despised by her subjects, and called "Bloody Mary," for her following her religion in her own lights, and finally having lost Calais, it hastened her death. The loss of Calais was the last straw that broke the camel's back, (no disrespect to Queen Mary is intended by the comparison). and she took it so much to heart, that on her death-bed Her Majesty exclaimed to her rebellious nobles that if her heart were extracted and examined they would find Calais written on it. Even so, if it had been possible to hold a *post mortem* examination on Akbar the word Agra might have been found indelibly stamped on his heart.

Agra was before the days of Akbar an insignificant place. It was merely "a local habitation and a name." Originally, it was a village dependent on Biana and Sikander Lodi made it his capital. But the old Agra of the Lodi dynasty lay on the left bank of the river Jumna. The modern city on the right bank, at the time of the accession of Akbar, consisted simply of an unsightly citadel of bricks' but soon afterwards, under the direction of Kasim Khan, an able officer in the imperial service, massive buildings sprang up. Akbar inaugurated his reign by building the grand Fort of Agra, a colossal and almost impregnable structure and which, during the dark days of the mutiny, harboured many a European. His immediate affluent and enlightened successors still further enriched Agra, by constructing the world-renowned "*Taj*," that "dream in marble," as Sir Hunter terms it, and other remarkable edifices, a brief history of which I shall give in my subsequent Papers.

Probably, Agra was doubly endeared to Akbar, by the memory of his grandsire Babar, meaning Lion. During the decline of the Mughal Empire, Agra with the rest of the province fell under the sway of the Mahratta, and continued with them until 1803, when it was surrendered to Lord Lake and thus fell into the hands of the British.

It is lamentable that during the mutiny of 1857 most of the archives and chronicles relating to Akbar and Agra were destroyed. Few authentic accounts have been left us regarding Akbar, who was the actual founder of the Mughal Empire in India and the greatest and wisest Emperor that sat on an Indian throne. Akbar was the contemporary of Henry IV, King of France, and Elizabeth, Queen of England. Akbar certainly can be mentioned in the same breath with those Western monarchs and the student, who has read without prejudice the lives of those mighty ones of old, will, I think, award the palm to Akbar.

Akbar the Great was the son of Humayun and the grandson of Babar the Lion. Babar, who was lineally descended from Timur the Tartar, or Tamerlrne, in the year 1526, after conquering the Kingdoms of Samarkand and Kabul, marched down to India, through the passes of Afghanistan, at the head of his hardy northern horsemen. The then Delhi sovereign, Ibrahim Lodi, opposed him, and the famous and decisive first battle of Panipet was fought in 1526, but the Indians fled, unable to withstand the furious onslaught of the flesh-eating Mughals. Babar received the homage of the Moslems, but he was opposed by the Rajputs of Chitor, and one of the battles that took place between Babar and the Rajputs for sovereignty was a deeply contested one. Babar had to encounter tremendous odds, but his indomitable energy and gallantry prevailed. At one time, it appears, Babar's hopes trembled in the balance, and he vowed to Allah, if the victory was vouchsafed him, he would never more touch wine and that he would make Agra his capital. Babar won the day, kept to his vow and died in Agra in 1530, leaving an Empire, which stretched from the river Amu in Central Asia to the borders of the Gangetic delta in Lower Bengal.

To return to Akbar. Akbar was born in 1542 and his reign lasted for nearly half a century. His father Humayun, after ten

years' struggle with the Afghans and thoroughly defeated by them, fled across the desert of Sind to Persia, and *en route* his devoted wife being taken with the pains of labor, Humayun halted at the petty fort of Umarkot and there Akbar was ushered into the world. Very few of his followers cared to follow the fortunes of poor Humayun. He and his faithful wife had to wander about in dreary deserts, unfriended, penniless, and forlorn, when each sigh that they heaved illustrated the words of the poet :—

> "Sad is my fate,
> The wild deer and wolf to a covert can flee;
> But I have no refuge from famine and danger;
> A home and a country remain not to me."

Humayun was even destitute of means to give *baksheesh* to the few followers that were with him when Akbar saw the light of day. It appears all that Humayun possessed at the time of Akbar's birth was a pod of musk and this he cut with his sword and distributed amongst his few devoted men, saying :—"May the virtue and glory of Akbar spread around like the perfume of this musk." A prophetic wish this and we shall see it amply fulfilled.

It is stated that when Babar was living Humayun fell dangerously ill and his life was despaired of. Babar, who dearly loved his son and who was a man of deep devotion, "hoping against hope," prayed to the Almighty to spare his son and that if a life was wanted, he was willing to sacrifice his life for his only son. Like Jacob of old, Babar "wrestled with the angel," and his prayer was answered. Strange to relate, as Humayun recovered from his incurable malady, Babar sickened and died. The reason how and why such things happen I leave to the philosophical student. I mention facts as they are related and when they happen to be beyond human ken I console myself with the words of the Bard of Avon—"there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in human philosopy."

It is bootless to follow Humayun in his misfortune and vicissitudes. His career may be summed up in the pithy lines of an ancient Poet :—

> "The blackest ink of fate was sure my lot,
> And when fate wrote my name, it made a blot."

Unlucky Humayun died at Delhi and Akbar succeeded him in 1556, at the tender age of fourteen, and under General Bairam, who acted as Regent, he subdued the revolted Afghans and utterly

defeated them in the second battle of Panipat (1556). Scarcely was Akbar seated on the throne, when hostilities broke out. Delhi and Agra were wrested from him and only a small portion of the Punjab constituted his Empire. But, by the valor and wisdom of Bairam, his lost sovereignty was regained. When Akbar was 18, he dispensed with the services of Bairam and took the reins in his own hands. Bairam stormed, protested and raised the standard of revolt, but was defeated by Akbar, pardoned, pensioned, and on his way to Mecca on a pilgrimage was assassinated by an Afghan, whose father he had slain in battle. Akbar, like Queen Elizabeth, was fortunate in the choice of his ministers. Assisted by Abul Fazl, his able Finance Vizier and religious adviser, Raja Todar Mall, his astute and clever Hindu Revenue Minister, and Feizi, the brother of Abul Fazl, an erudite Sanscrit and Arabic scholar, Akbar rose to eminence. Akbar took to himself wives from the daughters of the proud Hindu Rajas and by this wise policy of intermarriages, as well as his religious toleration and benign rule, he conciliated the Hindus and consolidated his Empire, which, at his death, embraced almost the whole of India including Aghanistan, and his revenue is said to have amounted to 50 millions sterling per annum.

In his latter days, he passed a law, contrary to Mahomedan faith, that "no one was to marry more than one wife, except in cases of barrenness; but in all other cases the rule was one God and one wife." One of his favorite wives was Mary or Mariam, said to be an Armenian Christian, and one of his sons, Prince Murad, was, it appears, a christian. Akbar's sister-in-law, the beautiful and accomplished Juliana, who practised as a Doctress in the Seraglio, was given in marriage to Prince John Phillip Bourbon of Navarre. Prince Bourbon was a member of the younger branch of the family of Henry IV of France. Tradition relates, the Prince was obliged to leave France, having killed a relative of high position in a duel. He heard of the fame of Akbar and came to his court. Akbar, hearing of his rank and prowess in arms, appointed him Nawab, made him his brother-in-law and placed the imperial seraglio under his care, and the Lady Juliana was included in the select band of the imperial sisters. The honorable office conferred on Bourbon remained in the possession of the family until the sack of Delhi by Nadir Shah in

1737. There is a goodly number of his descendants still in Bhopal, some of them holding high positions under Her Highness, the Begum of that place.

It is worthy of remark, that there was a time, when it was not considered *infra dig* for a European, and that a nobleman of the Royal blood of France, "the bravest of the brave, the gayest of the gay and the proudest of the proud," to wed an Asiatic woman. But now, alas! opinions seem to have undergone a change. Here is a *pabulum* for the philosophical student.

When the Romans newly conquered Britain, it appears a Roman centurion, smitten with the charms of a British maiden, wedded her. When the news reached his parents in Rome, the Roman Patrician lady wrung her hands, tore her hair and indignantly exclaimed to her household, "My noble son married a horrid native girl of Britain," and the proud Roman father repudiated his son, for lowering himself in marrying a British maid, Princess though she was. Yes, true indeed is the saying, "circumstances alter cases and faces," and that if such a marriage as Bourbon's happened in our enlightened (!) times, it would have deen considered a *mesalliance* and Reuter would have found abundant matter for his press messages. To a reflecting mind, here is food for thought and chewing the cud of bitter reflection. I, for one, am constrained to say, *"O tempora, ! O mores." !*

Akbar, like the famous Haroun Al Raschid and other Eastern monarchs, delighted in having court fools and wits around him. Pre-eminent amongst his wits was Mullah Do-Pyazah. Tradition relates how on one occasion, Akbar sent him to the Shah of Persia, with a casket containing rich presents. Before leaving the place, the contents were abstracted by some of the Mullah's enemies and stones and earth substituted. The Mullah reached the Persian court and on the day appointed the casket was opened in full audience. Conceive the astonishment of the Mullah and Shah to find the casket filled with rubbish instead of jewels. The Mullah was dumbfounded and the Shah speechless with rage. "Mullah! art thou tired of life that thou hast dared to come to me with this rubbish?" demanded the Shah in a voice of thunder. The Mullah guessed that a shabby trick had been played him, but his ready

wit saved his head. "May the Lord forgive us all," replied he, "for, O king, these things that you call rubbish, ought to be the most precious things in the eyes of the faithful; these stones and this earth are from the very place where the martyrs fell at Kerbella." It was with great trouble and expense that His Majesty Akbar Shah procured these relics and he has sent them to you, knowing well that they would be better appreciated here than by the Sunni population of India." The words had the desired effect. The Shah and the Grandees looked with reverence towards the casket, and the Shah distributed the contents amongst his eager courtiers and there was a regular scramble for the relics.

At another time, it is recorded, that the Mullah, who raised a number of enemies amongst the Persians, was asked in full court, who was the greater King,—Akbar or the Shah of Persia. The enemies of the Mullah knew that if he answered one way or the other, the party disparaged would be sure to take revenge on him. But they reckoned without the host, for the astute Mullah was equal to the occasion. He first hedged and hesitated but on the query being repeated by the Shah, the Mullah replied "Oh! Your Majesty! what comparison can there be between your august self and Akbar Badshah? You are like the full moon, while Akbar is like the new moon." The answer discomfited his enemies and pleased the Shah, who, soon afterwards, dismissed the Mullah with costly presents. Arrived at Agra the Mullah was coldly received by Akbar, who had been pre-informed by some of the Persian courtiers of the comparison drawn between him and the Shah. "Well Mullah, what is this that I hear of your doings in Persia," demanded Akbar, "are you one of those wretches who makes holes in the very dishes from which they eat." "What have I done, your Majesty," humbly replied the Mullah. "Did you not disparage me in the presence of the Shah, by comparing him to a full moon and me to a new moon," was the rejoinder. Characteristic of oriental shrewdness was the Mullah's reply: "Oh King! this comparison is in no way disparaging to you, for while the moon, day by day, increases in lustre and magnificence, the full moon, on the contrary, wanes and dwindles away. Besides, your Majesty knows well, how eagerly the eyes of the world are turned towards the sky at the beginning of every

month, to look for the new moon, but no such eagerness is displayed, even to the least degree for the full moon." This ingenious reply put Akbar into good humour.

It is also related when Mullah Do-Pyazah was in Persia, he was one day invited by the Shah to look over his portrait gallery. The Shah was jealous of Akbar and thinking to have a joke at his expense, had previously ordered the portrait of Akbar to be put in the royal privy. After showing the Mullah the portrait gallery, the Shah told the Mullah, "there is now left only one portrait worth seeing and I am sure you will recognise the person in the portrait. My chamberlain will show it to you." The Mullah, piqued with curiosity, was conducted to that part of the building and shown the portrait of Akbar. The Mullah felt the insult keenly and resolved to be even with the Shah. He said nothing, but on the Shah asking him if he recognised the portrait, he boldly replied as follows:—"Yes, your Majesty, I recognised it. Your Majesty, the portrait is of an awe-inspiring Emperor, whom you are so much in dread of that the mere sight of his face acts on you like a purgative. You have, therefore, wisely chosen the site of the portrait, so that you may never have to complain of constipation of the bowels."

One more instance of the ready wit of the Mullah and I have done with him.

The Mullah once seriously incurred the displeasure of Akbar and the Emperor peremptorily ordered him to quit his dominions. Some days after this circumstance, as Akbar was riding through a forest, he saw a man, who at the sight of the Emperor immediately climbed up a tree. Akbar rode up to the tree and on looking up recognised the Mullah. "Are you here still," demanded Akbar angrily, "did I not order you to quit my dominions?" The Mullah humbly replied from amongst the branches, "Pardon your servant O! Akbar. I travelled over the whole world, but wherever I went, on asking the inhabitants, whose dominions these are, I received invariably the reply they belonged to the Emperor Akbar. So now, I have no other resource left but to go to Heaven and to-day you see me already arrived at the first halting station." The reply so pleased Akbar that he laughed aloud and once more the Mullah basked in the sunshine of Akbar's favor.

Akbar's policy was far-seeing and its effects far-reaching. He pursued his policy of placating the Hindu Rajas chiefly by intermarriages. He also took good care to provide a career for the lesser Hindu States. He appointed his relatives and sons as governors of provinces and raised Hindus to high positions in the State, according to qualifications. He abolished the *Jaziah*, the hated tax on non-moslems and placed all his subjects upon a footing of political equality. He showed his taste for literature by having all the Sanscrit sacred books and Epic poems translated into elegant Persian and evinced a keen interest in the religion of the Hindus and Christians. He respected their laws but put down all inhumane rites. He forbade trial by ordeal, animal sacrifices and child marriages. He legalised the re-marriage of Hindu widows and tried his level best to abolish *Sati*, which was centuries afterwards made a *fait accompli* by Lord William Bentinck, one of the Viceroys of India. Akbar incorporated his Hindu subjects into the effective force of his empire, both civil and military. With their aid he reduced the independent Mahomedan kings of Northern India. He subjugated the petty Hindu Potentates from the Punjab to Bihar. The Rajputs of Chitor were overpowered after a protracted and strenuous struggle but they would not mingle their high-caste Hindu blood even with that of a Mahomedan Emperor. The Rajputs were the only Hindu race who stood proudly and sternly aloof and found shelter among the mountains and deserts of the Indus, where they eventually founded Udaipur, which remains to the present day. Akbar extended the Mughal Empire from the heart of Afghanistan across all India north of the Vindhya range, eastward to Orissa and westward to Sind. He removed the seat of Government from Delhi to Agra and founded Fatehpur Sikri as the future capital of his empire, but owing to the superior position of Agra on the great waterway of the Jumna, he gave up this project and made Agra his capital. In 1566, he built "Agra Fort," whose red-stone battlements majestically overhang the river. The fort is a massive one and to a lay mind looks impregnable. But Lord Kitchener, who lately visited Agra Fort, said that with the modern implements of warfare he could raze the fort to the ground in a few hours. Akbar's efforts to establish the Mughal Empire in Southern India were frustrated by the

valour and statesmanship of Chand Bibi, the Mussulman queen of Ahmednagar. But Southern India was afterwards subjugated by his grandson, Shah Jahan, the builder of the glorious "Taj".

On Fridays, it is said, Akbar loved to collect professors of many religions around him and listened impartially to the arguments of the Brahman, the Moslem, the Zoroastrian, the Jew, the Jesuit, and the Sceptic Philosopher, and the controversy is recorded in his *Akbar-namah*,—a book said to be written by himself.

It appears Akbar was well disposed towards all classes of Christians. Two of the most noted Catholic Missionaries that were with Akbar at Agra were Father Rudolph Aquaviva S.J., son of the Duke of Arragon and Atria, and Father Jerome Xavier, nephew of St. Francis Xavier, "the Apostle of the Indies." Father Aquaviva (called Redif by some Historians), it is recorded, disputed with a body of Mahomedan Mullahs before an assembly of the Doctors of all religions and had the best of the argument. To Akbar's great grief, he subsequently sealed his faith in Martyrdom at the island of Salsette. Father Jerome translated the Gospels into Persian and presented the work to Akbar which he greatly prized. It is also authentically related that a chapel for the Christians was built at the Emperor's own expense and that an imperial *firman* was issued by Akbar, that under no circumstance were the Christians to be molested and that they were to be allowed to perform their rites with perfect freedom. In this, probably, Akbar was persuaded by his Christian wife Mary and his brother-in-law Nawab Bourbon, as well as his latitudinarian principles.

Starting from the broad ground of general toleration, Akbar assisted by his friend and Vizier, Abul Fazl, was gradually led on by free discussion, to promulgate a new State religion called "The Divine Faith," which was based upon natural theology and comprising the best practices of all known forms of belief. Of this patched-up creed Akbar was the Prophet and every morning he worshipped in public the Sun, as the representative of the divine soul which animates the universe, while he was himself adored by the ignorant multitude. This highly incensed his Moslem subjects, but so great was their love and respect for Akbar, that they remained quiet and looked upon his new-fangled ideas as the results

of dotage. His favorite son and heir-apparent, Jehangir, an orthodox Mahomedan, took umbrage at Akbar's doings, and got rid of Abul Fazl, the promoter of the new religion, by violent means, and soon afterwards Akbar returned to the religion of his fathers.

It was undoubtedly wrong and mean of Jehangir to have Abul Fazl treacherously beheaded by the Rajah Narasing Dev of Urcha, for Abul Fazl was well advanced in years and was the faithful friend and Vizier of Akbar. In those unscrupulous times, might was right and everything was fair, where love, war and religion were concerned. The death of Abul Fazl was a severe blow to Akbar and when he beheld the lifeless mangled body of his staunch friend despoiled of his head, in his bitter anguish and poignant grief, he threw off a couplet in Persian :—

> " When full of zeal my Sheik to meet me came,
> To kiss my feet without a head or foot he came."

Akbar's last years were embittered by the intrigues of his family and by the misconduct of his beloved son Salim, who ascended the throne under the title of Emperor Jehangir, and in whose court appeared Sir Thomas Roe as British Ambassador.

Akbar had rendered a great Empire possible in India by his policy of conciliating the Hindu races and by his beneficent rule. Under his successors his wise policy was eschewed, hence, the downfall of the Mughal Empire.

The late Poet Laureate in his " Dream of Akbar," graphically describes the situation :—

> " I watch'd my son
> And those that followed loosen stone from stone
> All my fair work ; and from the ruin arose
> The shriek and curse of trampled millions, even
> As in times before."

The evening of Akbar's life was very sad. The loss of his friends and Viziers, Abul Fazl and Feizi, greatly preyed on his mind. Added to this, the untimely death of his two sons and of his dearly loved mother, was more than what he could bear, and which brought his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. It is stated that Akbar kept up a deep mourning for his mother,—a mother who shared in his sorrows and joys ; he clad himself in black, shaved his head and beard, and avoided all ornament in his apparel ; and when her body was conveyed to Delhi, he placed his shoulder under the bier and

helped to bear it for several paces. Shortly after his mother's death, when he was about to be gathered to his fathers, he summoned his nobles and after giving them much counsel and advice addressed them thus:—"If I have done any of you wrong, be pleased to forgive me." All burst into tears, and Jehangir the heir unable to bear the sight and touched probably by remorse, threw himself at his father's feet and wept with a loud voice. Akbar made signs to him to gird on his sword in his presence and Jehangir did so. Barely had he fulfilled the dying behest, when Akbar breathed his last,—"the breathing miracle into silence passed." A gloom settled upon all and India was in deep mourning for its king,—a king who stood head and shoulders over all oriental sovereigns, yea, even among very many occidental ones, and who is certainly entitled to a prominent niche in the temple of fame.

Space forbids me to comment on the successors of Akbar. Suffice it to say that during the anarchy and confusion which followed the wake of the degenerate and luxury-loving successors of Akbar, the British patiently built up a new power out of the wreck of the Mughal Empire, thus realizing the continuation of the Poet Laureate's lines in his "Dream of Akbar":—

> "But while I groan'd
> From out the sunset pour'd an alien race,
> Who fitted stone to stone again, and Truth
> Peace, Love, and Justice came and dwelt therein,
> Nor in the field without were seen or heard
> Fires of suttee, nor wail of baby wife,
> Or Indian widow; and in sleep I said
> All praise to Allah by whatever hands
> My mission be accomplished"—

Akbar died in 1605 and was interred in Sikandra near Agra, where a costly and noble mausoleum was erected to his memory and on one of its pillars shone the "Kohinur," which afterwards passed into the hands of Queen Victoria and figures as the brightest gem in the British crown. To the credit of Lord Northbrook, be it said, that during his *regime* as Viceroy, he presented a costly silk cloth of honor to cover the plain marble slab on Akbar's grave. Speaking of Akbar, Colonel Malleson justly observes:—"We are bound to recognise in Akbar one of those illustrious men whom Providence sends in the hour of a nation's trouble to reconduct it into those paths of peace and toleration which alone can ensure the happiness of

millions" and in the words of Col. Sleeman :—"Considering all the circumstance of time and place, Akbar has always appeared to me among sovereigns what Shakespeare was among poets, and feeling as a citizen, I reverence the marble slab that covers his bones, more perhaps than I should that over any other sovereign with whose history I am acquainted."

What nobler tribute can we have than the above? Of Akbar it can be truly said, that "though dead he yet speaketh, and that to live in hearts we leave behind is not to die."

M. A. WILLIAMSON.

Sankethams or the Ancient Religious Corporations of Malabar.

By Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon, B. A., B. L.

A *Sankethaın* is one of the many peculiar institutions of Malabar, which has, in the course of the many political revolutions the country has been subjected to, altogether disappeared. The term itself has lost its original signification and is now used simply to mean a tract lying within certain defined limits. Originally it meant the independent jurisdiction of Pagodas and Brahman communities which were places of refuge altogether inviolable by any one by long established custom.

Many of the more important Devaswoms or temple endowments had their own Sankethams which were well defined and of large extent. Within these limits the temple Corporation used to exercise Sovereign authority. The temples and the lands attached to them were originally the creation of Brahman lords and communities who under the early theocratic form of rule owned the proprietorship of all lands in Malabar. Those Brahmin lords identified themselves with these Corporate estates which they had created and as time flowed on they associated with themselves, for political reasons, a secular leader to defend those possessions. That secular leader became part and parcel of the Devaswom Corporation. The Brahman lords themselves never gave up their right of ownership or management. They along with the secular leader and other persons attached to the temple collectively termed a *Yogam* managed the temple lands and ruled the tracts lying within the limits of the *Sankethaın*.

The very existence of such a constitution as that of the *Sankethaın* was much discussed recently in connection with certain disputes regarding the exercise of Sovereign rights within the limits of the lands attached to the Elangunnapuzha and Annamanada temples between the States of Travancore and Cochin. These disputes along with others were referred for settlement to the arbitration of an officer appointed by the Madras Government. The two temples mentioned may be taken as typical instances of Devaswom

Corporations. According to both parties the Elangunnapuzha endowment was the creation of a local Chief or Raja. Travancore contended that the pagoda was built by the Raja of Parur, and the villages which formed part of his territories were ceded to the *Devan* (god) and constituted into a *Sanketham* under his protection, on the 24th day of the month of Makarom of the year 2767 Kaliyugam Era (B.C. 335). According to Cochin the Devaswom was founded and endowed by the Raja of Cochin, who is said to have purchased 5½ *Desoms* or villages and presented them to the temple—date not known.

With regard to the Annamanada Devaswom Cochin stated that it was founded and endowed by ten Nambootiries and that the *Sanketham* of the Devaswom comprised 12½ villages. According to Travancore the lands attached to the temple were known as forming Adoor Gramam comprising many villages with a superficies of about 10 square miles and was styled Adoor Grama *Sanketham*. It is described as a remnant of Brahman sway over the Malabar country.

Travancore referred to a document containing answers to questions alleged to have been put to four Nambootiri Brahmans at the instance of Major Cadogan, British Resident in Travancore and Cochin in A.D. 1829 and answered by two of them. These questions were :—

1. What is meant by a *Sanketham*?
2. How many kinds of *Sankethams* are there?
3. What Sovereign powers can a Raja, whose territories surrounded a *Sanketham*, exercise over the properties and ryots of the said *Sanketham*?
4. Does the Civil and Criminal jurisdiction in a *Sanketham* vest in the Raja whose territories surround the *Sanketham* ?
5. Please state in detail what *Koima, Aka Koima* and *Samudayam* are, and their respective functions and powers?

The substance of their answers was to the effect that the term *Sanketham* applies to a village over which no Sovereign has any right or jurisdiction, that there are two kinds of *Sankethams*, viz., those self-existent, as remnants of Brahman supremacy of old, and those created under concessions made by Sovereigns in favour of pagodas or Brahman communities from motives of religion ; that the

Sovereign whose territories surround a *Sanketham* has, as such, no authority of any kind over it, but all powers are vested in the *Sanketham* authorities conjointly with the Sovereign elected by them; that the Civil and Criminal jurisdiction over *Sankethams* vest in the constituent members elected or in the Sovereign protector of their choice; that the terms *Koima, Aka Koima, Samudayam* are applicable to the managing members who are generally Sovereigns elected for the purpose. In short, then, a *Sanketham* meant according to them an independent constitution governed by its own members and presided over by a Sovereign elected by them.

Cochin stoutly denied the existence of any constitution as above set forth and put forward its own version thus :—" *Sanketham* is a tract of territory, belonging to a Pagoda, the limits of which are defined. Within these limits no act calculated to pollute the Pagoda, to which the tract belongs, can be committed. Such lands as are exclusively set apart for the performance of ceremonies, &c., at the pagoda are said to be lands comprised in the *Sanketham*; and the Sovereign has as much sovereign supremacy over it as he has over other portions of his territories."

Mr. J. C. Hannyngton the arbitrator rejected the Travancore document as "inadmissible under the rules of evidence," which, however, are not applicable to proceedings before an arbitrator,*—and expressed his opinion that "the existence of such an extraordinary Corporation as is described as a Sangaitham or Sanketham in paras 13 to 15 of the Travancore Statement, must be admitted to be improbable, inasmuch as no trace of any such constitution exists." He continued, "That a Sovereign who founded a pagoda and endowed it with lands should give to the managers the power of emancipating themselves at pleasure from his sovereign authority and adopting at will a different and probably a rival chief as sovereign is well nigh incredible. The learned Arbitrator was forced to admit that "the condition of things in the days when this Pagoda (that of Elangunnapuzha) was founded and endowed was very different to anything now existing. I am justified in stating that the Sovereigns of the State in which this Devaswom existed even though they themselves were the individual founders of the Devaswom

* See Indian Evidence Act, Section 1.

conceded to the deity through his managers, powers within the limits of the Devaswom which included every function of Government save and except Royalty. Within their Devaswom limits, the managers of the temple collected revenues and exercised all judicial powers. The Sovereigns, themselves yielded homage and paid substantial tribute to the Devaswoms (they do so still). The various chiefs or Swaroopams assisted in the management of the Pagoda and in the celebration of its ceremonies. In course of time these endowments were infringed upon and these privileges curtailed as the secular influence prevailed and the religious influence diminished."

Possibly the learned Arbitrator was correct in his decision regarding the constitution of the particular Devaswoms with which he was dealing. But the reasons on which he founds his conclusion seem to throw doubt on the possibility or even the probability of existence at any time of any such institution as a *Sanketham*, as "an independent constitution governed by its own members and presided over by a Sovereign elected by them." We are in no way concerned with the merits of the dispute between the two States, but in the interests of history we think it necessary to scrutinise the general reasoning on which the non-existence of such a constitution at any period of Malabar history is sought to be based, It is argued that such an extraordinary corporation could not have existed as it is "improbable inasmuch as no trace of any such constitution exists at the present day." The argument is, to say the least, unsound and fallacious. Because we are not in a position, now, to detect traces of an ancient institution that had flourished in the remote past, does it follow that it could not have existed at any time at all? If so, many an ancient institution now defunct, having passed into the limbo of oblivion, leaving behind but a bare name will have to be declared as having never existed at all and yet we have instances of institutions and usages of hoary antiquity of which very little trace can now be found. Mr. Hannyngton himself observes "I believe that the condition of things in the days when this Pagoda was founded and endowed was very different to any thing now existing." He adds "In course of time these endowments were infringed upon and these privileges curtailed as the secular influence prevailed and the religious influence diminished" and this supplies a conclusive answer

to his objection that "no trace of any such constitution exists at the present day." Not to travel beyond Malabar itself we find at present no traces whatever of the following old institutions and customs, viz., *Kudippaka*, *Mamankam*, *Changadam*, the custom of Nairs constituting themselves "Amoncos" or Amocçhi. Nor is there any trace at present of the custom mentioned by Barbosa of the Kings of Quilacare publicly cutting their own throats clean at the end of their 12 years' term. Such instances, e.g *Pangam*, *Purapad*, *Pattini*, &c , may easily be multiplied specially with reference to the period of Brahman sway in Malabar.

The early Jewish and Syrian Copper Plates unmistakably show that when those deeds were executed there were guilds in existence exercising functions of government, not unlike those exercised by the constituent members of *Sankethams*. The Jewish and Syrian guilds assembled in their respective Corporate head-quarters at Anjuvannam and Manigramam "to protect the Church people's (Palliyar) town." Referring to the Syrian and Jewish Plates Mr. Logan observes "The light thrown by these deeds on the state of society as it existed in the 8th and 9th centuries A.D. exhibits a community in a very advanced state of organization. At the head of all was the *Kon* or King or Perumal—drawing from the land a share of produce of the soil called the *Ko-pad's* share (*Varam*). Another share of the produce went to the *Pati* (over-lord) intermediary between the *Kon* and the actual land-holder. The *Pati* it seems was not any particular person, but a body Corporate of the Jews in their Municipal township of Anjuvannam, and (inferentially) of the Nairs in their Corporation called the "Six Hundred." But each body corporate had a hereditary head-man or chieftain. These bodies corporate seem to have constituted the political backbone of the country and their particular functions in the State were those of protecting and of supervising . . . ."* Where are these institutions or organisations at the present day? A hundred and odd years of British domination has wiped them off the face of Malabar so completely that the present day Malabar Christian, Jew and Nayar have no idea whatever of the position their fore fathers occupied in the body politic. These deeds further indicate

* Logan's *Manual of the Malabar District*, Vol, I, page 271.

the existence of other corporate bodies in Malabar such as those of the five kinds of artificers, the oil makers, Ezhavas, Chetties, &c.

To Mr. Hannyngton it seemed "well nigh incredible" that a Sovereign founder of a pagoda and its endowments should "give to the managers the power of emancipating themselves at pleasure from his Sovereign authority and adopting at will a different and probably a rival chief as Sovereign." Mr. Hannyngton has evidently failed to correctly understand the origin and nature of these foundations. In the particular case he was dealing with, he has assumed, or it may be that it was proved before him, that the temple in question was founded by the Sovereign and the lands attached to the Devaswom were a gift from him. But if we keep in mind the origin of the Malabar temples and the hierarchical rights given hereunder it will be clear that the learned Arbitrator's argument is of very little use to support his conclusion. To say that the ancient temples of Malabar were endowed by the Sovereigns would be to put the cart before the horse.

A writer in the *Calcutta Review* has given us a correct and rational account of the origin of these temples and their endowments and of the nature of the heirarchical rights so peculiar to Malabar.

"According to all legends and all available evidence, the Malabar Coast was populated by Aryan emigrants from the eastern side of the Ghauts. It is equally a fact that the priestly class not only predominated among the emigrants, but actually monopolised the whole of the land of their adoption to themselves, the rest of the emigrant population being their 'drawers of water and hewers of wood'—their serfs, or at the most, their tenants-at-will. But to stereotype the configuration of a society for all time to come is as much an impossibility as to fix that of the clouds in the sky. Aggregations and segregations of power, influence and wealth must ever and anon go on under the guidance of the universal law of struggle for existence and survival of the best. Those priests are the wisest, and consequently the most powerful, who without directly arrogating secular power to themselves can bring into the meshes of their moral influence, those in whose hands the universal law places such power. The ecclesiastics of the Malabar Coast knew this as instinctively

as the ecclesiastics of Rome. But they had the additional advantage of having something more solid than benedictions and indulgences to confer upon their political stewards—*viz.*, the sovereignty of the land which exclusively belonged to them. They were equally wise and far-sighted in another step they took. They foresaw that the halo of sanctity which encircled themselves might not be proof against the gradual degeneracy of religious feelings which time must produce and the consequent encroachment upon their supremacy in the land. And they constitutionalised that sanctity, by demising large tracts of land and their revenues to certain temples built and consecrated by them. Who would not hesitate to commit sacrilege on an object of general religious worship? Of these temples the priest assumed the proprietory wardenship. Almost every temple of note had a synod of these priestly wardens. They invited the leading lay-man or chief to a membership of the synod and entrusted to him the stewardship of the whole temple domain subject to their superior authority. Thus arose these rich temples. Thus arose the sovereignties of the Malabar Coast."*

Most if not all of these Devaswoms were Brahman foundations and the body of the Brahmans—the Yogam—the community to which these belonged called in the Sovereign or elected him only to protect the temple and its endowments, and to preserve the rights and customs, just as the Namboories called in or elected Perumals from outside Malabar to rule over them for a term of 12 years. The fact that these Sovereigns were generally Samantha Kshatryas and were designated Koviladhikarikal (Temple Managers) is significant enough. "Namputhiri Brahmans" observes Mr. Justice Kunhi Raman Nair in his Memo on the land tenures of Travancore," who held sway over the Devaswoms or Pagodas possessing immense wealth and landed property, invoked the assistance of Samantha Kshetryas, and these managed the Devaswoms under the designation of Kovil Adhikarikals. The Devaswoms exercised sovereign functions within the limits of their landed property as did wealthy classes of Brahmans generally within the limits of their Sankethams (tracts assigned to Brahmans). The life and liberty of the

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* Vol. for 1883, pp. 286—7.

Devaswom tenants were at one time at the mercy of these Devaswom communities."*

The Copper Plate inscription dated Puthuvaipu 103, i.e., 619 M.E.—1444 A.D. filed by Cochin and marked A by the Arbitrator affords ample support to this. For, it concludes by saying "Perimpadappu (the Cochin Raja) has the authority (in the Elangunnapuzha temple) to cause the different Swaroopams (Principalities) to pay the fines should they have committed any irregularities, *to protect* the Sanketham and to preserve the rights and customs thereof." The Cochin Raja still styles himself Kovil Adhikarikal in the documents he executes with regard to landed properties. In the early days of Brahman supremacy their political and spiritual influence over the constituent members of the corporations as well over the various sovereign rulers whom they themselves had created or called in was so great that it was almost impossible for any conflict such as contemplated by Mr. Hannyngton to arise. It is an open secret that the ecclesiastics of Malabar like those of Rome always kept the rulers of the land under the thumb. To a large extent they do so still. There is indeed considerable force in the Travancore Dewan Ramiengar's observation that "such Corporations as Sankethams in olden days are by no means the myths he (the Arbitrator) imagines them to be. If there was such a thing as the Hanseatic League—a mere trade union—in existence till the fifteenth century exercising acts of sovereignity and judicial power which were incompatible with the supremacy of the rulers in whose States they were enforced; and if it is a fact that the Head of the Romish Church at one time so arrogated all civil power to himself as to set up kings and to depose kings, there is nothing incredible or extraordinary in the existence of such independent hierarchies as are implied by Sankethams in a country at all times acknowledging the domination and influence of its Priesthood."

That such institutions did actually exist and that they exercised sovereign powers within the limits of their authority, even though there were Sovereign protectors placed over them, we have abundant evidence to show. An *imperium* in *imperio* is not more

* Mr. Justice Kunhi Raman Nair's Memo on Land tenures of Travancore, para 26, pp. 10-11.

extraordinary in mediæval Malabar than in mediæval Europe. Have we not instances of Republics flourishing under the protecting ægis of Monarchies? The earliest mention we have by Portuguese writers of a Sanketham is that of Elangunrapuzha itself. It is referred to as a "Sanctuary the Samorin dared not violate" to which the Cochin Raja retreated for safety after his defeat at the battle at the Edapilly ford where three of his nephews including the heir-apparent Narain, (Marumahan?) were killed* (A.D.) 1503.

Again we read of the "free Desam" of Nedumpuram into which the Queen of Peritally retired when hard pressed by the King of Travancore. The Dutch Governor Mr. Adrian Van Moens in his 'Memorials' speaks of 'Replim' or Elappilly as a "free town." He says:—"The Company has little to do with the Chief. However, it is expedient for us to know that his little State is a kind of asylum, like a free town, to which people, who are afraid of prosecution and punishment, retreat, and where they are safe; and more especially when they are able to reach a temple or pagoda there. This privilege is acknowledged and respected by all Malabar kings. However, I never could find out on what right or grounds this privilege is based, unless it be that this State obtained this privilege as a matter of course on account of its ruler being a priestly and a very pious chief of the principal priestly caste among the natives." But the Ambalapuzhay or Chempakaseri Raja who also belonged to the priestly caste and who as Hough assures us on the authority of Gouvea was no less pious never possessed the privilege so far as his territory was concerned. The origin of the privilege has to be sought for in the early peculiar institutions of Malabar. Close upon a century after Barbosa and the other Portuguese authors wrote, Gouvea in his Journada describing the visitation of Archbishop Menezes to the Romo-Syrian Churches mentions Chengannoor in Travancore as forming a Sanketham. We take the following extract from Hough who writes on the authority of Gouvea. "After passing through these villages he (Menezes) visited the Church of Chenganore. This town is said to have been more celebrated for the worship of idols than any other in Malabar. In fact, the country itself was the property of a pagoda

* *The Rise of the Portuguese Power in India*—Whiteway.
The Keralapazhama, p. 39.

or temple *whose brahmans exercised sovereign power*, and appointed governors and subordinate officers throughout the province."

"The Church at Chenganore stood out of the town, and so absolute was the power of the brahmans there, that the Christians were not allowed to repair it without their consent. Gouvea says, that it required a miracle to obtain for these poor people permission to tile their Church; for the Brahmans objected to it, lest the Christian temples should vie with their own."*

Ward and Conner in their *Memoirs of the Great Trigonometrical Survey* (1816 to 20) describing Travancore say: "The original likeness, the ample space included within the modern limits of Travancore, is not to be traced in its present united form; at the commencement of the 18th century it presented the same divided authority as the other parts of Mallialum, but the imperfect memory of its ancient State, can now enumerate only a few of the larger principalities. Kotium was held by a Kurtav, Keedangoor Koymah was the independent possession of a number of *Sankaidoms*, (independent possession of pagodas) *was ruled by Brahman authority which extended through other tracts*."¶

As to the nature and extent of the authority exercised by these Corporations within the tracts ruled over by them it may be difficult to define them with precision at this distance of time when all traces of ancient institutions have been ruthlessly effaced. Still such Grandhavaries or contemporary chronicles of temples as have fortunately escaped the vandalism of the iconoclastic tendencies of modern times which have found expression in the organised and systematic destruction of old records in Government offices, &c., give us some faint conception of the powers exercised by Sankethams originally.

In the Grandhavari of the temple at Vaikkam, in Travancore, we read that it was the duty of the Nambootiries of the four *Cherics* or divisions into which the gramam was divided to report to the Samudaya Yogam, i.e., the Committee of Management, any crimes *or derelictions of duty committed* by any one in their respective divisions and it was the duty of the Samudaya Yogam to summon the offender at once to their presence, investigate the matter and

* *History of Christianity in India*—Hough. Vol. 2, pp. 175-6.

¶ *Selections from the Travancore Records*

inflict condign punishment on those convicted. Again before hoisting the flag for the *Utsavam*, i.e., the annual temple festival, the Committee of Management had to see those convicted by them of murder, within the Sanketham limits, hanged. This was observed till the year 977 M.E. (1802 A,D.) when it was stopped.

A *Chatta Variola* or Rules for the regulation of business in the Elangunnapuzha Temple drawn up in 958 M. E. (1783 A. D.) embodies a provision for the hanging of murderers by the temple authorities within the Sanketham.

Even the Sovereigns themselves were subjected to penalties for acts of tyrrany committed by them within the Sanketham limits and on the officers and men of the Sanketham. The constitutional rules of the Sanketham were such that if ever any of the chiefs or their followers committed an atrocity within Sanketham limits the Sanketham was held to be dissolved and till ample amends are made by the delinquent chief or till they are exacted from him by the Sovereign protector the working of the Sanketham comes to a standstill. The Sovereign protector himself is not exempted from these penalties if he is the erring individual. Thus in the Elangunnapuzha temple we gather from the copper plate inscription already referred to that "should any of the Swaroopams (Principalities) of the Sankethams be found guilty of any irregularities, the Nambooripad (the chairman of the yogam) fines the party and then gives permission to hoist the flag (for the *utsavam*) sending the Tevari Namboory along with him," and it is the duty of the Cochin Raja to levy the fine as protector of the rights of the Sanketham. Again another document dated 10th Kumbhom 191 Puthuvaippu Era, 697 M. E. 1522 A. D., embodying the observances of the Devaswom marked D in the Arbitrator's records says "when all the Yogakkars (members of the Sanketham) shall have fully assembled they shall repair to the aforesaid place and ask the Nambooripad whether he would give permission for the Kodiyettu, commencement of the *Utsavam* (by hoisting the flag) and the Nambooripad shall, on his part, enforce a penalty from any of the Swaroopams (sovereigns) who has been guilty of any fault: and then grant the sanction applied for." It further proceeds to say "on the 18th Vrichigam 88 at half past 9 P. M. the individual named Peroomparayan was put to death by

Thekkankoor Raja. On the occasion the Sankethain was dissolved. Twelve months after the said date the Koimasthanam (an important office in the temple) was surrendered. For the above and certain other faults of Thekkankoor Raja in accordance with the decision of Arbitrators composed of a representative of the Perimpadappu Swaroopam, Parkalamattah Vasudevan Nambootiri, Perayil Narayanan Kumaran Nair and other Arbitrators then present, the Perempadappu Swaroopam (the Cochin Raja) who was the Melkoima, sovereign protector, presented (a euphemestic expression to mean that the Raja was mulct of an elephant as a penalty for not restoring the Sanketham) an elephant together with the Thotti and Walara (hook and stick) and thus renewed the management of the Sanketham." Another document a Grandhavari of Pallipurath Nambooripad marked E by the Arbitrator, of the date 740 M. E. 1564—1565 A. D. recording the encroachment and tyrranical acts committed by the Pintani Vattathu Swaroopam (the Paroor Raja) within the Nedungad Desam of the Elangunnapuzha Sanketham, on a particular day, mentioning the atrocities, goes on to say: "We (Pallipurath Nambooripad, a high functionary of the temple) withdrew from the place on the same day; on that day the *Desam fell* (customary observances of the Desam were stopped)." Other atrocities followed. The Nedungad people retaliated by entering Paroor territory pulling down houses. The differences continued for about 8 years when the Pallipurath Nambooripad, says the document, "went in person to Elangunnapuzha and having said what was proper offered to do what was necessary. After this the Perimpadappu Swaroopam (Cochin Raja) and the Pintanivattathu Swaroopam (Paroor Raja) arrived at Elunggunnapuzha on the 7th Kumbhom and summoned Moothedathu Namboory * * * * * * * * Rayathil Para, Ponancottil Bhattathiri and Palikkamana Bhattathiri to act as Thatassers (arbitrators) in adjusting these points. In accordance with their decision the Pintanivattathu Swaroopam paid compensation for losses inflicted and expenses of the Pattiny fast as also fine for the wrongs committed. For the acts of aggression committed by the Perumpadappu Swaroopam the Pathies (on behalf of the Raja) presented an elephant and placed its Thotti and Walar (hook and stick)". The document then proceeds to prescribe the manner in

which the fines are to be levied. It says:—"When the latter ceremony takes place (i. e. the levy of the fine) Pazhedath Panikkar should stand in the Kanni Rasi. We (Namboori pad) should occupy a seat in the Mandapam (raised stone platform in front of the inner shrine) and Thevari (priest) and Yogakkar (members of the Sanketham) assemble and stand in the Telikkappura (Portico of the temple). When the Yogakkar ask us "whether we are satisfied with the fine we should signify our assent and order it to be levied and then Mannath Noothathu should take charge of it."

On the 23rd of April 1814 the Uralers or Elders of the Elangunnapuzha temple and various aged men of the Desams attached to it, having been called on to depose "to the rules and usage observed in the Elangunnapuzha Devaswom Sanketham and Desams from ancient times," stated that Ochenthuruth, Manjanacaud, Moondengad, Vysrakal, Poocad and Nedungad Desams (villages) formed the Sanketham or jurisdiction of the Elangunnapuzha Devaswom. Among the rules and usages mentioned by them is the following: "If a man commits a crime in any of the Desams, so that it becomes corrupt, the Paroor and Cochin Rajas should both jointly repair to the Vadulmatam gate, in the Pagoda, and cause the culprit to be punished and the Sovereign of the culprit should present the Pagoda with an elephant."

In the Trichoor temple Grandhavari for the year 945 M.E. (1770 A.D.) we see that before the Kalasam ceremony was performed in the Pagoda heavy penalties were exacted from the Ayanikkoor Chief for having shot thirty-two men of the Devaswom and committed other atrocities in the Sanketham. He had to surrender 3,941 paras of seed-sowing land, Mangalath Matapad, one of his residences, as also six villages in addition to it. The fine was levied at a public ceremony in the temple in the presence of the Swamiars, Vadhyan Nambootiri, the Brahmans of the Yogam, Kakkat Karnavapad and other local Chieftains and the Cochin Raja. The Kakkat Karnavapad as the head of the Ayanikkoor family had to confess the crime, pay the penalty and present an elephant. The Cochin Raja, too, had to present an elephant for the delay in enforcing the penalty on the wrong-doer. This was on the 14th of Medom 825 M.E. (1770 A.D.)

Similarly, the account preserved in the Archives of the

Trevandrum Pagoda show several entries of heavy payments exacted by the Yogam from various Chiefs as well as from the Rajas of Travancore for acts of aggression committed by them in the Devaswom Sanketham. So far as can be ascertained at present these entries range from 500 M.E. (1325 A.D.) to 903 M.E. (1728 A.D.). The earliest entry says that a sum of 30,000 fanams had to be paid as fine together with the surrender of valuable lands sowing 150 paras of paddy seed to the temple by Kunninmel Sree Veera Kerala Varman Tiruvadi (of Travancore) for killing the officers of the temple. The latest one says that Sree Veera Rama Varma of Trippapoor Kizhapperoor, (Travancore) being the Mootha (eldest) Pandaram of Cheravai, was mulct in an elephant for his having, on the 14th of Medam 896, committed various atrocities and killed Devaswom officers within the limits of Aykkonam, Veeranarayanasseri, Vikramanadichamangalam, Pulloor Kuruchi and Rajakkamangalam, lands belonging to Sree Padmanabha Perumal (the presiding deity of the Trevandrum temple). Another entry of the 15th Dhanu 894 refers expressly to the Sanketham. Payments had to be made in full by Sri Vera Aditya Varma of Trippappoor Kizhapperoor (Travancore) being the Mootha Tiruvadi of Cheravai for committing atrocities within Sree Padmanabha Swamy's Sanketham and collecting revenue therefrom. Villages yielding an annual revenue of 12,000 fanams were surrendered for this. For committing incursions in the Sanketham Villages two elephants had to be presented and in place of men and slaves killed others had to be given up.

A document produced by Cochin and marked K in the arbitration records gives us a fair idea of the government of a Sanketham and the rules and observances obtaining therein. They deal in deed with the Elangunnapuzha Devaswom but they are an index of the general system followed in other Devaswom Sankethams as well.

A perusal of the document certainly leaves the impression that the administrative functions of the Sanketham are complete in their own way and provide for no intervention of an outsider. Para 2 lays down that the Uralers conjointly with the Aka Koymas constitute the governing body. Para 4 states that the Koyma or the representative of the Sovereign, whose duty is to administer the villages,

was to be nominated by him on intimation being received of a vacancy and the procedure to be followed at the ceremony of nomination. Paras 5, 13, 16 to 20 and 35 provide for punishment of offences and paras 8, 24 to 26, 32, 33, 39 and 40 provide for the collection of different kinds of land revenue from all the Villages. While paras 11, 12, 21 to 23 and 36 provide for a system of registration of all deeds relating to transactions of immovable property and the fees to be levied for the same paras 5, 16 and 17 show that the Koyma assisted by the Pathies exercised the authority to pull down houses, (simliar provisions are to be found in the Trichoor Temple Grandhavari) and to inflict capital punishment over the inhabitants of the villages. Para 32 lays down that the money and paddy paid to the Devaswom for the paddy lands and gardens owned by the States of Cochin and Travancore shall be continued to be paid in future without intervention. The amount, if any, in arrears, should also be paid after due enquiry. Para 40 says the '*Karam*' (tax) payable to the Devaswom on the paddy lands and gardens of the six Desoms (villages) shall be paid regularly from 958 M.E. Para 9 authorises the Koyma to levy a house-tax on the houses of certain classes of the inhabitants, and para 10, a profession tax on outside Pulayars (agricultural slaves) while para 15 imposes a cess on oil mills. Paras 7 and 13 show that the Yogam, *i.e.*, the Aka Koyma together with the Uralers, constituted the highest governing body while paras 14—31 and 34 state that they received a subsidy from the villages besides other dues. Paras 2, 7—13, 14, 29, 31 and 34 make it clear that the Aka Koyma presides at the meetings of the Yogam bearing a prominent part in the ceremonies attendant on the appointment of a Koyma to the villages, receiving a double share of subsidy. He had at one time the privilege of demanding grants of money from the villages.

An attentive consideration of this document places it beyond dispute that the *Sanketham* in itself constituted a self-contained and independent community exercising sovereign powers. In fact we find in it all the elements that go to constitute a body politic which, thongh of primitive structure, was self-working and independent owning no Sovereign except the Yogam. Of course these Sanketham jurisdictions have ceased to exist with the rise of the Secular

power and the diminution of religious influences. Just as the Cochin Raja has stopped the Avarodham or installation of the Yogiathiripad in the Trichoor temple, he as well as the other Rajas of Malabar have infringed upon the rights of the Devaswoms within their limits and annexed them to their respective States. With the advent of British Supremacy which was not long after followed by the assumption of the government of the Native States of Cochin and Travancore by the British Resident, Colonel Munro, most of the rich and important Devaswoms were annexed to the States and it necessarily followed that their Sankethams also ceased to exist as independent jurisdictions. It was about this time that the Jews also lost their independent jurisdiction in Cochin. The age of materialism had dawned. The rights of Sovereign States to ride roughshod over the privileges and liberties of the subject population hitherto curtailed by popular assemblies and institutions designed and aimed to safeguard the interests of the people, but which had ceased to exist for some time past, came now to be protected by the mighty power of the British Government which as the Paramount Power became henceforward the final Court of Appeal both for Prince and people.

K. P. PADMANABHA MENON.

The Battle of Bobbili.

By Mr. T. S. Narayanah.

MUHAMMAD ALI fell out with his English allies and was deserted by them. This was just the opportunity which Dupleix was waiting for. His hopes of founding a French Empire in India received a terrible shock at the battle near Pondicherry where the French troops were overtaken and utterly routed. Chanda Saheb fled southward and Muzaffur Zung fell into the hands of Nazir Zung. But Dupleix would not so soon give up his schemes. He possessed an uncommonly stout heart. The enmity between Muhammad Ali and the English revived the dead ashes of his ambition once more into a flame and he lost no time in sending General Bussy against Muhammad Ali. The latter was utterly defeated at Punnur and eventually murdered by a set of conspirators. Dupleix released Muzaffur from his confinement and placed him on the throne, but he could not long enjoy his high position as the same conspirators who helped in placing him on the throne by the assassination of Muhammad Ali, killed him also. The French then placed Salabat Zung on the vacant throne of Deccan, who ceded to them in 1752, as a token of his gratitude the Northern Circars, for the maintenance of a European army in his territory. The English were just at this time in a very critical situation. The whole of Deccan passed under French influence and their territory extended as far as Puri in the north, while the English were insecurely clinging to their settlements at Madras and Fort St. David. Dupleix's dreams of founding a French Empire in India seemed to be on the verge of realisation. But the French Government was dissatisfied with his method of extending empire and he was recalled in 1754, and Bussy's authority in India became for a time unquestionable. It was during this time that the memorable Battle of Bobbili was fought.

The Rajahs of Bobbili and Vizianagram, both in the District of Vizagapatam, were for a long time on terms far from friendly. The latter had cherished a deadly hatred and jealousy for the former, owing, as it is commonly believed, to a defeat he suffered at the

hands of Bobbili sometime before, in cockfighting, and was ever scheming to wreak his vengeance on Bobbili. The opportunity so anxiously awaited presented itself before long. It was alleged that the Rajah of Bobbili had caused the obstruction of the flow of water into his lands. The right over the canals through which the water flowed belonged to Bobbili but Vizianagram was by custom suffered to use the water of these canals for the irrigation of his own lands. The Rajah of Vizianagram thought that the ruler of Bobbili had no business to cut off the supply of water to his lands and this was provocation enough for him to declare war against Bobbili. But Bobbili was not easy to conquer. It was the land of the Velamas, a race of fierce warriors whose deeds of valour and heroism could be compared only with those of the Rajaputs of Chitore. So, Viziarama Razu, the Rajah of Vizianagram, wanted to befriend Bussy the French General and through him win his ends.

On the 19th of December, 1756, Bussy and his secretary Hyder Zung arrived at Rajahmundry for collecting revenue from the zamindars of Northern Circars. They pitched their tents near Kotilingam, a place of pilgrimage on the banks of the Godavery, and issued notices to all the zamindars demanding tribute. Many of them repaired to Rajahmundry to pay their homage and annual tribute to the French. Among those that were absent was the Rajah of Bobbili who was detained on account of some important marriages in his palace. Viziarama Razu noticed this and wanted to turn it to his advantage. He met Hyder Zung in secret conference and told him that Rajah Rangarao of Bobbili was an impertinent and independent zamindar who had not cared to pay his visit to the French General; that he was so much puffed up with pride that he would not care to obey the French. He roused the anger of the Mohamadan secretary to the highest pitch possible by clever insinuations and innuendoes and hinted that the prestige of French arms in India would go down unless they insisted on every vassal zamindar paying his homage in person to Bussy. He then disclosed his scheme and promised to pay the French 12 lakhs of rupees if they would dethrone Rajah Rangarao, and place him on the throne instead. The French were just at this time badly in want of money. The Carnatic wars dissipated their treasury and 12 lakhs of rupees would be

an irresistible bait to them. Hyder therefore readily consented to help Viziarama Razu.

Hyder Zung then duly represented to Bussy that the Rajah of Bobbili was an insolent and independent sort of zamindar who disobeyed the French General's orders to pay homage and tribute to the French, and urged on the necessity of inflicting an exemplary punishment on him. The promise of 12 lakhs of rupees was then communicated to Bussy and he was made to swallow the bait and become a willing party to the conspiracy of Hyder and Viziarama Razu.

The intelligence of an intended attack on Bobbili by the united forces of Bussy and Viziarama Razu was conveyed to Rajah Rangarao. He could not understand what made the French General treat him so badly. A meeting of his relatives, friends and courtiers was at once called for, and the expediency of addressing Mr. Gore, who was then in command of the French troops stationed at Masulipatam, was decided upon. Arrangements were made at the same time to place a strong garrison in the Fort of Rajam situate on the way leading to Bobbili. Tandra Papayya, one of the best friends of the Rajah and the bravest of the warriors of his time, was despatched to Rajam with an army of choice sepoys.

The Rajah's letter requesting Mr. Gore to interfere on his behalf and put a stop to the intended attack on his fort was duly delivered to him. Mr. Gore was a friend of Rajah Rangarao and he always admired the valour of the Velama. He could not understand what on earth Bussy meant by declaring war against Bobbili. He thought that the French General had been misled by Hyder Zung and immediately sent him a despatch stating that it was unwise to fall out with Rajah Rangarao and urging on the necessity of refraining from an attack on Bobbili and befriending the Velama Rajah. Bussy received the message delivered to him by one Mr. Martin and began to fume and fret at Hyder Zung. He knew that Mr. Gore was no ordinary politician and cherished a high respect for all his opinions. He then questioned Hyder about the truth of his representations against Bobbili and doubted the propriety of declaring war against Rajah Rangarao. Hyder found out that he was suspected and his position and honour were in jeopardy. He felt the

heat of the water he had been placed in, but he would not under any circumstance eat his words. He once more affirmed before the French General with all the loudness and vehemence he could summon to his aid, that the Rajah of Bobbili set the French authority at defiance in that he did not care either to come and see the French General or to remit his dues. He said he was a Mahomadan and as such he was not trained to pocket insults. His persuasive eloquence and mock-indignation convinced Bussy of the expediency of inflicting an exemplary punishment on the Velama Rajah by capturing Bobbili. The French General replied to Mr. Gore that he could not see his way to act up to his advice.

Much confusion prevailed in the town when the news had arrived that the French and Vizianagram forces were stationed at no very great distance from the Fort. Rajah Rangarao and his brother Vengal Rao, an equally brave warrior, were on the ramparts inspecting the defences. The Rajah then sent a message to Hyder that he was not in any way faulty, that he would fain pay his tribute and acknowledge the suzerainty of the French and requested him to desist from the unjust undertaking. But Hyder would not listen to any terms. He touched his sword and promised the Rajah of Vizianagram to dethrone Rajah Rangarao and he would do so under any circumstances. He replied to the Rajah of Bobbili that his absence from the French camp was a sufficient cause for capturing Bobbili. He further said that the Rajah's men had unreasonably caught hold of some of his sepoys on their march and thrashed them. He would therefore at any cost punish the leader of the Velamas. The fact was that at the instigation of Viziarama Razu some men of Hyder were intercepted near a garden that belonged to Bobbili and were roughly handled by Vizianagram sepoys and the false report was communicated to Hyder that some Bobbili sepoys ill-treated his men. This was an expedient schemed by Viziarama Razu to fan the wrath of Hyder against Rajah Rangarao to a full blaze. Hyder was perhaps willingly blind to the injustice of the cause he espoused but how far the French General was to blame in the matter it is not easy to decide.

The battle began early in the morning. The French sallied forth to the ramparts and attempted to scale the walls. For a time they

were unsuccessful. Their attempts to force their way through the gates of the Fort were equally unsuccessful. But a breach was at last effected and the fight that ensued was bitter. It was inevitable that the Fort should fall into the hands of the enemy. Rajah Rangarao ordered his brother to go to the zenana and kill all the women lest when the Fort was occupied they should be ill-treated by the Rajah of Vizianagram. All the ladies in the Fort were killed, but the queen had managed to save her infant son by placing him in a basket and sending him out of the Fort through a confidant. The royal child was however intercepted on his way to Samarlakota and delivered to Bussy. Many Velamas fell dead or wounded. At last the Rajah of Bobbili too fell down and died but not before killing a good many soldiers of the enemy. Bussy and even Hyder could not but appreciate the valour and heroism of the Velama princes. Hyder was stung by conscience and his face wore a gloom of repentance. Bussy felt at last that he was misled by his secretary and regretted that for a paltry sum of 12 lakhs he sent a whole race of warlike princes to premature graves.

Vengal Rao, the brother of the deceased Rajah, was still prepared to fight. But Bussy could no longer tolerate the battle. He admired the bravery of the prince and marching to him with repentance in his eyes shook hands with the Velama warrior. He was then saluted as Regent to the Prince of Bobbili and Rajam. The surviving child of the late Rajah was then brought back and handed to Vengal Rao.

Tandra Pappayya came to know the terrible fate of Bobbili. The news of his Rajah's death flamed him into a blaze and he left Rajam where he had been stationed, for the camp of the Rajah of Vizianagram. He forced his way to the bed-chamber of the Rajah and before Viziarama Razu had time to recover from the shock he felt at his sight, pierced a dagger into his heart and then heroically killed himself. There is now a column built on the tragic spot not many yards away from the present residence of the Rajah of Bobbili to mark the deed of Pappayya known among the Velamas as the "Tiger of Bobbili."

T. S. NARAYANAH.

The Problem of High Prices.*

By Prof. V. G. Kale, M. A.

THE one great problem which more than another dominates the public mind at the present moment is the problem of prices. The high prices, that have recently become a feature of our economic condition, have come to claim a degree of attention few other questions have attracted during the past few years. This is because high prices more or less affect all people. The rich and the poor, the employers and the employes, the salaried and the wage-earners, the people, individuals and institutions—all these, in one way or another, are interested in this question of prices. Though the subject is thus an all-absorbing one, its seriousness is equalled only by the obscurity in which it is involved, and the difficulty of reducing the high prices to a definite cause and suggesting remedies to bring them down. Public opinion expressed in the press and on the platform, the Council Chamber and the Congress, has demanded an inquiry into the whole question and Government have been requested to appoint a commission of experts to investigate the subject. Assurance has been already given to us that the question is engaging the serious attention of the Government. Sir G. F. Wilson, in the speech he made the other day in the course of the budget debate in the Imperial Legislative Council, adverted to the high level of prices and made a few general remarks on some aspects of the question. In passing he examined the theory of the exports of food grains as an important factor in raising prices and indicated that the adoption of a gold standard by India has something to do with the upward movement in prices. He said that the approached the subject with great reserve, both on account of its complexity and because it is at present being discussed between the Government of India and the Secretary of State. The Hon. Mr. Gokhale, who opened this question in the Council last year, referred to it this year also.

He pointed to the inflation of the currency as being responsible for the continued prevalence of high prices in all parts of the country

* An extract from a Paper read before the Deccan Sabha, Poona.

and with a diffidence quite justified by the complicated circumstances of the case suggested a change in the present currency policy of Government. Other people, publicists or otherwise, have put forward various theories widely differing from one another and the complexity of the question has been made more complex for the ordinary man. When gentlemen of recognised authority in such matters differ widely and feel diffident about this perplexing problem it would be sheer rashness for any other person to express any definite opinion. I am not however going to rush in where other people have feared to tread and lay down any theory or make definite and dogmatic assertions. I merely propose to lay before you the various explanations of high prices that have been so far offered and see how far they can be said to contribute in raising prices. It is a question of practical economics and finance surrounded by a variety of difficulties, and I have ventured to take it up because I feel that a statement and discussion of the various theories is sure to be both interesting and instructive in as much as it may help us to arrive at the truth.

CAUSES OF THE TROUBLE.

There are a variety of causes, remote and immediate, direct and indirect, which have combined to force prices to their present high level. What is the exact degree of their influence cannot be definitely ascertained but that they have had a share more or less cannot be doubted.

(1) The first place in order though not in importance among these causes may be given to the occasional droughts of varying dimensions and intensity devastating large tracts and killing considerable number of men and cattle with which we have now become so familiar. If we begin with the year 1891-92 when there was a prolonged drought we find that prices which were sufficiently high during the quinquennium of 1886-90 were still further raised during the next few years. A strong Indian demand for rice was coupled with large exports; there was an unprecedented export of wheat owing to failure of crops in Europe which pushed up prices here to the famine point. With better seasons prices cheapened but they did not go back to their old level. Prices of food grain again went up to the highest level then on record during

the famines of 1896-97 and 1899-1900. During this period one export trade in rice was kept up on a large scale and in 1898-99, the years preceding the second famine, export of food grains exceeded three million tons. In the next few years prices went down but stocks exhausted by lean years take time to be replenished. In fact of late years the stocks of food grains, which were so common formerly, have disppeared and when there is a diminution of production in a year of drought, there are high prices and consequent distress.

(2) The second cause seems to be that the outturn of the food grains has not been keeping pace with the increasing demand for them. In some places, such as Bengal and parts of Bombay, the cultivation of jute and cotton, which are more paying, is being substituted for that of food grains. The area under food grains, which was 188¾ million acres in 1896-97, rose to 195 millions, in 1906—07 the highest figure during the last decade, which means an increase of 7·17 per cent., in ten years, while the area under cotton and jute increased by nearly 50 and 70 per cent. respectively during the same period. The yield of rice which was nearly 500 millions cwts. in 1097—98., 505½ and 505½ million cwts. in the next two years, shows an average of about 444 million cwts. only during the last five years, the figure 500 never being attained for the past nine years. The yield of wheat which averaged 7½ million tons during the first half of the decade commencing from 1897—98, became no doubt 8½ on an average during the second half, the acreage under it increasing by nearly 25 per cent. in ten years. But now-a-days wheat appears to be grown more largely for export than for home consumption and supply. In spite of the havoc made by plague, malaria and droughts, the population of the country must be increasing to some extent, and this increase must press on the soil and the prices of food grains must go up. Another important factor is the incrased demand for food grains created by facilities of communication and transport such as railways, steamers, which carry these grains into all the nooks and corners of the country. The phenomenon of a province with abundance of food bordering on a district with a population starving for want of the same, is becoming more and more rare. The large annual coastwise exports of rice from Burma

to Bombay and Madras are an illustration in point. These exports which were 195 thousand tons valued at more than 1½ crores in 1903-04, come to 460 thousand tons valued at 3½ crores in 1905-06 and to 979 thousand tons valued at 6½ crores in 1907-08. This more extended distribution tends to equalise prices. It will be obvious even to a superficial observer that the standard of life of people living on the line of railways is gradually becoming higher as things which were mere luxuries to them before are being brought to their doors by the easy means of communication.

WHEAT AND RICE.

(3). I have said above that exports of food grains have often been maintained on a high scale even in times of scarcity. Exports of rice, which is one of the most important food stuffs in this country, have been on a pretty high scale during the past few years. Both wheat and rice are grown more largely for export. Grain elevators about which so much is being said now-a-days and dock facilities at Karachi and other parts, as also railway arrangements on a more convenient and cheaper system, point to the larger and larger exports of wheat and other food grains. The Hon'ble Sir G. F. Wilson tried to show in the Imperial Council the other day that in as much as the quantity of the foodgrains yearly exported to foreign countries bear a very small proportion to the production of the same, they cannot be said to affect prices in this country. This was meant as a reply to the suggestion of some people who hold that large quantities of food grains being exported every year, the quantities available for home consumption are not adequate to the demand, and hence their prices have risen and who have proposed that a sufficiently high duty on these exports may be levied to the advantage of the Indian consumer, as these duties would lower prices. Whether this remedy is likely to serve its end or not, it will be easily seen that exports must tell upon prices, if it is borne in mind that owing to increased internal demand caused by extended facilities of communication and the growing wants of the people and the failure of the outturn of the food grains to keep pace with that demand, exports, however small proportionately to production, must diminish the quantities required for ordinary consumption at home and thus force up prices. Again we see actually that the higher prices fetched by the food grains when exported to the rich

foreign countries which can afford to pay highly for their food must naturally influence prices here and must bring the latter to their own level.

(4). Last but more important is the theory of the superfluity of currency in the country which has been advanced by gentlmen whose opinion is entitled to great weight in the matter of economics and finance. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale put forward this view of the cause of high prices in his budget speech last year and emphasised it this year also. That the prices of commodities in a country are to a certain extent regulated by the system of currency obtaining in that country seems to be generally admitted. It is a common place of economics that the number of coins in circulation in a place governs the prices ruling in that place. If the coins in circulation are not sufficient for the ordinary commercial transactions of a country there will be a very large demand for them which will raise their value like that of any other article and the purchasing power of the coins will rise. As a smaller number of coins will be available for exchange only a small number will be paid for articles. This means that prices of articles will fall. If on the other hand the coins in circulation are more than are required for the common transactions of the market the copious supply will lower their value and with it their purchasing power. More coins will be needed to purchase an article, in other words there will be high prices. This is exactly what has happened with respect to this Indian currency.

(5). The currency policy on which the Government embarked in the year 1898 however necessary and beneficial in some respects has in many ways disturbed the economic condition of this country: and having yoked India with the other gold-using nations of the world has launched us into uncertain waters. Waves of disturbance in the monetary position of the rest of the world do not fail to reach the Indian coast and involve us in the price fluctuations to which others are subject. The average wholesale prices of both imports and exports have not indeed been much infected by the uppish tendency noticed in the retail prices in the interior of the country. They are almost marking time except during the last few years when small disturbances might be discerned. The rise in gold prices outside must, however, affect the prices of those articles which are exported

to countries in gold currency. The same thing happens with respect to the imports. But these are disturbances which though affecting the general prices of articles in the country are a factor of a very minor importance when compared to the other causes that are at work in the country. Thus when the prices of food grains rose 16 per cent. in the United Kingdom during the last four years those in India have gone up about 43 per cent. How far the internal rise of prices induced by the rising gold price abroad will benefit the people of this country is problematical and even the Finance Member who suggests this close dependence of prices in India on those obtaining in other countries is not very sanguine about the future.

PROF. V. G. KALE.

Facts and Fancies about Snake-bite and Its Cure.

BY MR. R. KULATHU AIYAR.

RAJA Raja Varma, Koil Thampuran of Chemproor, Travancore, is a reputed authority in cases of snake-poison. He comes of a noble family, that of the Parappanad Rajas, a member of which house, H. H. Kerala Varma Valia Koilthampuran, shines so bright in the literary firmament. Another member of the same illustrious house, a brother of H. H. Kerala Varma, is a master of Aryan Medical Science (Ashtangahrydaya), and has been for a long time the honorary head of that department in the Travancore state. Raja Raja Varma, the subject of this sketch, is a genial old man, is a fair Sanskrit scholar, has made a study of medicine, and practises *Mantravadom* (excorcism) too on occasions. He lives a very retired life at his family seat, a good portion of his time being devoted to giving prescriptions and advice (free) to the poor.

From early boyhood, he had a great of fancy for travel. When scarcely thirteen, he left home in company with a "northerner", a former servant of the family. He first proceeded to Guruvayoor, associated with so many incidents of traditional celebrity. Thence to Gokarnam, the limit of Parasurama's land, it was but a short stretch, (though near fifty years ago it was by no means a holiday trip). While sojourning there, he fell in with a Nepalese Yogi, one of the class known in Malabar as a Gosais.* To judge from a description given by Raja Raja Varma himself, this *Gosai* seems to have been an extraordinary character. Like other Yogis, he grew his hair and beard very long but here the comparison ceased. He did not set up to be beyond humanity. He never affected abstemiousness. He could enjoy his bath, his dinner and his hookah. His forenoon was spent in devotion. He had his mid-day siesta. The rest of his day was taken up with writing (on palm leaf) and teaching, and rambling in out-of-the-way places for the collection of herbs and roots. He had a few disciples with him, always, who looked to his material wants. He never accepted money or valuables by way of offerings yet his necessities were always well-supplied. This *Gosai*

* Pilgrims from upper India.

with his disciples had been travelling from the foot of the Himalayas, and had at last come down to the "Land's end" of old India. The day our young traveller came across this divine, a marvellous cure was effected by him. The body of a wood-cutter was being borne along for cremation with the usual deathwail and auxiliaries. At a sign from the Yogi, one of the disciples ran up, and ordered the bier to be brought to him. It was an extreme case of snake-bite. After an examination, the Yogi injected a few drops of something into its nostrils. Satisfying himself that life was not actually extinct, he applied some more restoratives, in a few hours brought the man to consciousness, and by the next day effected a complete cure.

This incident settled our young *Thampuran's* future aspirations, and he resolved to follow the fortunes of the Yogi. For more than a year he accompanied the sage in his wanderings, anticipating his lightest wishes, and doing all he could to secure the *Guroo's* approbation. On the side of the master, too, the extreme devotion of the new disciple was not passed un-noticed. When the Yogi finally left the Deccan he called the young volunteer to his side, and asked him to name whatever wish was uppermost in his mind. One can easily guess what it was. After trying in vain to deter our Thampuran from following *Vishavaidyam* (poison-cure) as a profession, the sage initiated him into the mysteries of Garuda Thrayakshara and Panchakshara. He was, however, strictly enjoined on no account to accept remuneration for his services, and not to cause needless sufferings to the "poor" snakes. Thus they parted, the sage on his peregrinations and our young Thampuran to his family homestead.

The next few years of the Thampuran's life was spent in perfecting himself in his art. Old *Granthas* were hunted up. Live snakes were charmed out of their holes and experiments frequently made. Till at last, the matter reached the ears of his mother and he was strictly forbidden to practise his "unholy" art. For several years, the interdict continued, and when at last he resumed practice, it was with the hearty approval and the blessings of his mother. And this was how it happened. One evening, a faithful old servant of the family was ordered to climb up a *Vilva* (sacred to Siva) tree and procure some leaves. While descending, the man was viciously

bitten by what romancers might call "the guardian serpent of the Vilva". Inquiries were made after him rather a little late, when he was found lying unconscious at no great distance from the tree. The Thampuran was the only resort. At the express wish of his mother, he promised to try. The man, or rather the body, was removed to his own special quarters. Restoratives were applied. A tender plaintain-sheath was brought and cut into the shape of a serpent with head and tail and body complete. This was laid over the man with the head just touching the wound. Mantras were recited, and finally the *Bhishak* (Doctor) took a knife and dealt the sheath three furious stabs. The man was then ordered to be taken home and left to sleep off the after-effects. In two days he was as well as ever. Thenceforward the ban on the Thampuran was removed, and with the good wishes of everybody he was left for the future free to practise the art he had been at so much pains to learn.

Thereafter Raja Raja Varma has been devoting himself to his art with great success for the past several years. Cases from far and near are brought to him. And rare indeed are the cases in which he has not been able to bring about a cure. He has attained to such perfection in his art that he is said to feel a sort of premonition that a case would be brought to him at a particular hour. I have been informed that he sits up of nights betimes in expectation of a call. Very lately there was an instance that came within my personal observation. That was a case from Kumaranalloor, a distance of over thirty miles. The party arrived by canoe at night; and then at the landing-ghaut was our Thampuran's servant in waiting, to direct them to return, as the subject would have died by the way. And true enough, on examination it was found that life had ebbed out.

Such premonitions are based on a small treatise (in verse, as all old treatises are) called *Dhuta-Lakshanam* meaning literally signs from the messenger. The age and caste of the messenger, the direction from which he comes, the first words he utters to the *Bhishak*, the then-posture and attitude of the *Bhishak*, and a lot more of such details as any man might ordinarily regard as worthless, are the data from which inferences are drawn. Diagnosis thus seems to

proceed more from without than within. And yet one's scepticism meets with many a check in actual experience. The writer himself was one of those who started from a doubting post, though now he feels he would not be justified in scoffing at the whole thing as fanciful.

There are several different methods of cure and seven or eight ancient treatises bearing on the subject, viz.,

"Narayaniyam Uddesam
Ulpalam Haramekhala
Lakshanamritam Ashanga-
Hrydam Kalavanchakam."

Of these Narayaniyam and Lakshanamritam are the works generally followed in Malabar, though another treatise not among the number, called, Joalsnika, also has a fair following. Narayaniyam is the most important of these and is in old Malayalam. No counterpart in Sanskrit has hitherto been met with. And as Malabar with its magic and wonders, its native Nayars (= Nagars = serpents), and serpent groves in very homestead, has been noted for snake charming and snake-worship from the earliest times, it may fairly be presumed to be an indigenous work. It sets out with a classification of Snakes into four *Varnas* and eight *Vamsas*, and thence into a hundred and twenty varieties. One or two stanzas may be quoted as specimens:—

"Anantho Gulikaschaiva
Vasukee Sankapalakow
Thakshakastha Mahapadma
Padma Karkodaka Sthatha

Of Moorkhas 26——"Moorkhanmar Irupatharu
Of Mandalis 60——Jati Mandali Shoadesam
Of Rajilam 13——Rajilam Pathimmoonundu
Of Viyanthiran 21——Moovazhuntoo Viyanthiran"

And then it proceeds to describe the characteristics of the different kinds of snakes etc. Some of these *Granthas* are extremely rare, while probably the names alone of a few others have survived. *Joalsnika* has been set in print, though copies are not generally available.

The methods of treatment prescribed in the above works come under the three classes *Mantra*, (exorcism), *Tantra*, (making displays with the hand and other organs, *e. g.* the stabbing of the plantain-sheath described above) and *Oushadha* (medicine). From an examination of the bitten part the *Bhishak* is able to judge the

variety of the snake that caused the wound, the time that has elapsed since the bite as well as it is said the dimensions of the snake. In the *Tantra* process, the plantain-sheath or other substitute is cut to the probable length and figure of the snake, laid on the wound, and stabbed or cut up according to "the taste and fancy of the Bhishak." It is alleged that the snake which actually bit the subject would have felt the stabs, and that on proper search, it might be found with the identical marks on its body. Often-times, a cock or a hen is brought and the tip of its anus placed in contact with the wound. Sometimes the fowl is pricked about the leg, a little blood drawn, and the pricked part placed in contact with the snake-bitten wound. Of course the "all-essential" mantras are not omitted. The fowl, it is said, draws the poison to itself and the man recovers.

Another wonderful system is where the *Bhishak* by his *mantras* is said to induce the snake to return and suck up its own poison. Scores of such instances are quoted in daily life. The writer has been seriously assured as to the truth of this practice by people whose integrity* he finds himself unable to question. The system is said to be fraught with danger to the snake concerned. After the operation, the snake, which generally falls into a stupor, is thrown into a vessel filled with milk and water in which some antidote is dissolved. In the course of a few hours the snake will have recovered.

In the purely *Mantric* or *Dhyana* process, the *Bhishak* does not even need a sight of the patient. He only demands particulars of the name, age, and star of nativity, of the subject. The *Bhishak* lights a lamp and begins to chew betel and recite his mantras, when little by little the poison declines. The writer has come across a few of such instances, but whether the *Dhyana* had anything to do with the cure he is not able to pronounce. The treatise *Kalavanchakam* referred to above is based on *Dhyana* or exorcism exclusively.

Before our Criminal Codes became so stringent, there were some really dreadful practices current. In exceptional cases an incision

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* Unhappily 'integrity' is not the only factor which should be taken into consideration in estimating the value of such personal evidence. The intellectual capacity of the individuals in sifting facts from fancies, in weighing evidence to satisfy the the strictest scientific requirements, has oftentimes more to do with the probative value of their testimony than is commonly supposed.—[Ed. M. Q. R.]

is made in the head, a globule of medicine inserted and the incision closed up. A coarse saucer is next placed over the covered-up wound, and a stream of scalding medicated oil poured in, till the subject sweats in every pore and recovers (or succumbs). A piece of burning charcoal was sometimes placed on the head of the subject. Instances of the bitten part, if a finger or toe, being burnt up is quite an ordinary occurrence. Suffocation too was practised as a cure, the subject being held under water. Whatever claims our *Bhishaks* might put forward to the superior sanctity of their *mantras* they are not often found to discard the use of medicine in actual practice. As regards *mantras* and medicines alike, strict secrecy is enjoined and observed. Many of our Snake-charmers are known to possess special knowledge regarding the efficacy of diverse roots and herbs. Such knowledge becomes hereditary in the family. There is a special caste in Malabar,—the Kakkalars,—one branch of whose hereditary occupation is the catching and taming of snakes. A remarkable aspect about our *Bhishaks* is that they never receive remuneration for their services. The offer of a fee is regarded as an unmitigated insult and the acceptance a sin. So that it cannot be suggested that any deception is being wilfully kept up. A *Bhishak* in Malabar is generally a centre of attraction for the marvellous. Indians have never been open to the charge of barrenness of imagination. And with a subject of unlimited potentialities before them, the sons of Malabar are not likely to bring discredit on their nationality. Hopeless indeed is the task of him who attempts to detach fact from fiction. A Bhishak of the writer's acquaintance is prepared to stake anything, that with his *mantras* he will induce a kite *(Garuda)* flying in the heavens to come down and swoop off with a refractory snake. Another promises to make a mungoose do the same. The Nambudris of Pampoommakat in the Cochin State are believed to be the hereditary guardians of the snake-community. If a snake pit is found near a dwelling house, the Nambudri is appealed to and straight away he issues a mandate to the snakes to clear off. (That an orthodox Hindu will never harm a snake, goes without saying). Groves and woods are never cleared without the sanction of a member of that Illom. The Nambiathis of Mannarassalay, who own one of the most famous serpent-temple and groves in Malabar,

who fondle and make pets of serpents, are believed to be immune from snake-poison.

Stories might be multiplied, romantic, freezing and indifferent. Even as it is it may be pointed out on the one hand that we are past the age when such stuff might find credence amongst rational beings. The new spiritualists, on the other hand, attuned by nature and study to find, "books in running brooks and sermons in stones," might find something occult in such matters. It is hoped however that a dispassionate study of snake-bite, and the methods of cure, might repay the time and attention bestowed.

R. KULATHU AIYAR.

Legislation and Social Reform—A Reply.

BY MR. S. RAMANATH AIYAR, F. S. SC., M. R. A. S.

PERMIT me to offer a few remarks on some of the points raised by Messrs T. R. Pillai and G. Raman Menon in their rejoinders * to my paper on the above subject. The former confines his remarks less to the question of legislation in relation to reform than the other points with which he deals. The latter dwells more on the question of legislation and is less concerned with the other points in respect of social reform. It is convenient to follow the former first as regards some of the general points to which he calls attention and then take up the question of legislation in answer to both. Mr. Pillai starts with "a doubt as to whether I am in favour of reform" and, instead of reviewing me in my own position, creates a fictitious position for me by the unwarranted assumption that I am "not a promoter of or sympathiser with the movement for social reform, if not a positive reactionist." I need hardly state that my attitude is *not* that of an advocate committed to a side. To regard my attitude as such is a thorough misunderstanding, if not a deliberate distortion, of my views. Even a casual perusal of my paper will not fail to convince all except those who are wilfully blind, that I do not shut my eyes to the numerous evils that eat into the vitals of Hindu society and that I fully recognize the value, the necessity and the expediency of reform in several directions. My quarrel is only with the absurd attempt to lay the train for any social explosion, whether the attempt be in the nature of legislation or any form of activity as provocative agent of the present-day passion for reform at any cost, irrespective of consequences. I hold that adventitious stimuli or hot-house pressure of any sort will serve only to excite into fury the passions and prejudices of a thousand years. In other words, I set my face against "the method of rebellion" so aptly termed and vigorously denounced by the late Mr. Justice Ranade whose life was one noble record of glorious exertions for the regeneration of India's teeming millions. "The method of rebellion" has

* Vide the *Malabar Quarterly Review* for December 1908.

had its due share of vigorous denunciation from all true lovers of social reform. Mr. Pillai himself does not seem to favour this belligerent process, for, conscious of the evil effects of causing any rude shock to the existing state of things, he too advocates the adoption of "*gentle* measures such as those of personal example, mild persuasion, gentle advice, cool reasoning and dispassionate remonstrance" as some of the varied means to be employed for carrying out reform. Does he not therefore run full tilt against himself when, in spite of my unmistakable but different expression of the same sentiment—that "any forced upheaval, even if possible, is calculated to give a fresh momentum for the downward move"—he seeks to establish that we belong to opposite camps? Is not the cloven hoof of contradiction clearly discernible when arrogating to himself the pretensions of a champion of social progress, he assigns to me the part of "a positive re-actionist," both the arrogation as well as the assignment having for their common basis the adherence to the same principles of reform? It is gratifying, however, that Mr. Menon takes a different view and admits me into the "reformist's camp."

Again to explain the conditions in which the orthodox section of the people finds themselves is no more "upholding conservatism or championing social stagnation" than the exposition of the views of the liberal section is a plea for what Mr. Pillai describes as "the redemption of humanity from the flames of eternal hell." Explanations are surely no "remedies" and it is a gross blunder to take them as such. On the other hand, they are very essential to the gauging of the exact situation of affairs whether in religion, society or politics. Prof. J. Sully says:—"The intellectual progress of mind commonly takes the form of a triple movement:—(1) the assertion of a partial truth; (2) the re-action from this to the affirmation of the complementary half-truth; (3) a synthesis of the two partial truths in a more adequate conception." It was in view of such an adequate conception that I chose the method I followed in the treatment of the subject and it was for the same reason that I urged strongly that "the 'rush-forwards' and the 'let-alones' should approach each other, blend together and work in hearty fellowship." Resort should be had to all courses that would possibly give a wide view of all circumstances so indispensable for an adequate conception of our exact situation. This is especially

the case because as warned by a powerful European writer on Indian affairs, "most of the critic's weapons in this country are borrowed from the English arsenal and phrases which express the national growth in England are hurled at men and institutions of India as if they were certain to tell upon Indian Society with the *same effect*." History alone will disclose the conditions of the soil in which those central ideas have taken root and their suitability for transplantation in other climes. To history therefore one has to appeal both for the ascertainment of the conditions of social life as well as for the applicability of the fundamental laws of social progress. I am pleased to find that Mr. Pillai recognises the soundness of this principle and turns to history, while he discards my statement that "in India the Church got the better of the State in the struggle between the two." But does he not betray himself into astounding ignorance of the facts of history, when he makes the erroneous assertion that "history has not revealed to us of (sic!) any very serious struggle in India between the church and the state." Is not the ancient history of India covered by a long period of protracted rivalries for supremacy between the ruling and the priestly classes? What else do the stories of Vena, Nahusha, Nimi, Sudas and a host of other kings reveal? Is not the animosity between Viswamitra and Vasishta a reflection of the struggle between the priestly and the secular power? Who, that knows anything of the history of the Kshatriyas and Brahmins, knows not that it was a period of struggle for supremacy between the two? What do the twenty-one memorable excursions of Parasurama for the extirpation of the Kshatriya aristocracy indicate, save the preponderating ascendancy of the Indian priests and their influence in society? With the feudal system at the apex, the kings asserted their supremacy in Europe where during the middle ages similar struggles for supremacy between the Church and the State have taken place. In India, things took a different turn. The priests acquired a monopoly of privilege and influence which they were not slow to utilize in the building up of society. Such being the case, does not Mr. Pillai cut the ground from off his feet and make a wreck of himself by setting at defiance the authentic facts of history? Facts, as old Burton said, are stubborn things which can neither be brushed aside nor blinked out of

existence. Remarks that are the outcome of an audacious defiance of facts cannot claim to rise above the level of the ridiculous chatter of irresponsible frivolity. No wonder that such remarks often debouch and degenerate into a despicable swagger in utter scorn of "reverence for the past" and "loyalty to its traditions." Now, a full significance of the past course of history should always be borne in mind in examining the merits of our social condition lest the zeal to renovate it be misled into the absurdity of grafting mangoes on apples. The late Mr. Justice Ranade, the acknowledged champion of the reform party, preaches the Gospel of sanity and caution in the following memorable words :—"We have one continuous stream of life flowing past us and we must accept as valid the acts which were noted in the past and on the principles of the past and seek to turn the stream with a gentle bend here, a gentle bend there, to fructify the land. We can not afford to dam it up altogether or force it into a new channel. It is this circumstance which constitutes the moral interest of the struggle and the advice so frequently given—that we have only to shake our bonds free and they will fall off themselves—is one which mature and larger experience seldom supports. We cannot break with the past altogether; with our past we should not break altogether, for it is a rich inheritance and we have no reason to be ashamed of it." He goes on to say that while respecting the past we must ever seek to correct the parasitical growth that have encrusted it and suckled the life out of it and exhorts the social reformers "to seek their inspiration in the best traditions of our own past and adjust the relations of the past with the present in a spirit of mutual forbearance." To revere the past and to be loyal to its traditions is surely not to shut one's eyes to the defects of our ancestors. To denounce such reverence and loyalty is mischievous and ill-advised and equally opposed to historic reason and patriotic sentiment. It is no part of wisdom to eschew the sincere and solid support of society at large. Reform is not for the educated and enlightened few. It is for the backward many. Not that the former need it *less*, but the latter *more*. To suppose that, since a few among the educated few are prepared for reform, therefore the whole society is ripe or prepared for it is to cherish a delusion. It is manifestly an unserviceable hobby

to assume that the majority of the people are inherently vicious or incapable of reform and to brush them aside and resort to a method of coercive detachment from them, under the mistaken delusion of the misapplied maxim.

> "They are slaves who dare not be
> In the right with two or three."

Sir Subramoney Aiyar truthfully observes:—"Even under the most provocative circumstances you should not say it is impossible to get on with this old community. Let us form a new community. You become a new caste and have a new marriage law enacted in statute book. But so far as the cruel customs you complain of and so far as the relief of the oppressed are concerned, you will not be able to do any good." This is neither cant nor any device for inaction. The zealous party that rush forward in the mist of self-deceit that they carry the world with them, whether it will move or not, and the party jealous of such clumsy haste but blindly asking one to wait till the whole world moves, are both stolidly impervious to the true significance and application of the progressive ideals that have come to us with Western education and civilization. It is not upon violence that the most lasting monuments of victory have been reared. Ignorance of this betrays abject inability to distinguish between reform and revolution. To seek the help of legislation for every item in the programme of reform or to use it as a weapon of coercion is really disastrous. I do not denounce legislative help wholesale. What I stated in my paper was that "to compel people by legislation to accept notions however uncongenial to them would only convulse society." Mr. Pillai is obviously guilty of monstrous misrepresentation when he asserts that I "positively eschew the attempt to set in motion the wheels of legislative machinery for safe-guarding social interests." I shall now turn to Mr. Menon's remarks. It will be seen from the foregoing that my views coincide with those of Mr. Menon. He says that "one who is familiar with the principles of social science will be the last person to call for undue Government interference in any matter." So far, we sail in the same boat. All that I mean to point out and lay emphasis upon in my statement which Mr. Menon makes the basis of his theories and arguments, is simply the pernicious effects of calling for the aid of legislature for anything

and everything in and out of season. It will be singularly appropriate and advantageous in this connection to focus the views prevailing among the leaders of the social reform movement.. In his presidential address at the fifth session of the Indian Social Conference Mr. Khaparde says:—"I am against legislation, first because I believe in the maxim that reform should begin from within, secondly because it creates opposition for opposition's sake and thirdly because it destroys the self-acting machinery which we wish to create in our society. But where this is not possible or has been found by trial impracticable, then and then only I go in—and go in with zest—for legislation." The Honorable Rai Bahadur Ram Kali Chaudhuri who presided at the sixth session holds the following views:—"We should avoid state-help in introducing reforms in social life. This mode is calculated to bring about evils of other kinds and tends to retard progress. We are only to avail ourselves of the social force that will be created along with the formation of the public opinion." Dewan Norendra Nath expressed himself thus in his presidential address at the seventh conference:—"The magnitude of the evil to be suppressed has to be weighed against the evils inseparable from employing legislation as remedy. Whether it is possible to create public opinion in our favour and to achieve by exhortation and advice what would otherwise be attained by more stringent measures, whether it is worth our while to abandon self-help and to reduce ourselves one step further as automatons in the hands of Government are questions which we should put ourselves before deciding to seek the help of legislation. There is however no touchstone which we can employ as a test to distinguish the evils to a suppression of which legislation can be directed, from other evils." Rao Bahadur R. N. Mudholkar is of the following opinion:—"The social controversies of the last 16 years and more have satisfied many members of the party of progress who were first disposed to welcome outside help, particularly that of Government, that any proffer of such help or any demand for it, far from furthering the cause of progress, distinctly retards it by injuring the susceptibility of the people and rousing their suspicion. The change can be effected by the community alone. No compulsion from outside is feasible or desirable." Mr. Justice Ranade, whose whole life was devoted to the service of

our country, lays down the following principle. "I agree with my friend Mr. Manomohan Ghose in the view that social reform is eminently a question in which we must work for ourselves, and by ourselves, but there is one limitation to this freedom, viz., that where as in the case of the Age of Consent, as also in respect of the execution of restitution decrees and the disabilities of married widows, the law itself has laid down certain undesirable restrictions, a change in the law can alone remove the evil complained of. Manomohan Ghose is too good a lawyer not to be aware of this limitation. In regard to all other matters, the present programme of the Conference is to work out the changes proposed by organising and educating public opinion." The late Mr. Ananda Charlu, one of the most plain spoken men, who was for a long time a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council and whose opinion both as an eminent lawyer and an ardent social reformer is bound to carry considerable weight puts the whole matter in a clear, trenchant and convincing manner:—"I wish to emphasise that I desire no legislation under this or any other head of our internal economy. In the first place, it is next to impossible to get the bulk of our legislators, who can have our keenness on such points, to realise how dreadfully earnest we are on them. At best, they will give us the half-hearted help which is the *sine qua non* of good-natured and soft-hearted souls who cannot bring themselves to say a brutal nay. In the next place, we must despair of achieving any good on matters in which the Government are not interested, under a system of legislation which seeks for none and swears by none but high-placed official and officialised voices and ears and therefore hears not murmurs and spies not muddles on lower, plebeian planes—which makes no provision for taking evidence to gauge the public feeling as in the case of the recent Malabar Marriage Act—and which is resolved to get through the largest amount of cut-and-dry law-making, within the shortest space of time. Let us further note and take warning from the mode the work was done by the good souls who passed the Widow Marriage Act. All honour to them and may God and man bless their memory! For all that, who can fail to detect that, in their overflowing sympathy, they gave us a law, which, in their nervous fear of bringing a hornet's nest about their eyes, they managed, as it were, to

render quite abortive. They were between the devil and the deep sea and they contrived to scuttle out of the job, offering solatium to one side or administering solace to the other side to the question. But they either forgot or conveniently ignored how the dullest person believes that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush That they should have ever seriously persuaded themselves into hoping that matrimonially-disposed widows would begin with giving up the certainty of present possession for a problematic prospect of being no worse, would be incredible without a pile of affidavits in support. In putting our houses in order, we might therefore take a warning not only from that piece of legislation but also—if I may say so, without the risk of being misunderstood as pleading for my little bantling—from the manner the ill-conceived and ill-framed Pagoda Act came into being—an Act which has stood untouched, notwithstanding that it has been an unremedied scandal for nearly two score years, without raising a single, solitary beat of official pulse at the frightful spoliation of property, innocently but piously endowed for charity to man and service to God—though to a "heathen" man and to a "heathen" God."

The significance of these extracts and their bearing on the question of legislation in relation to social reform are so plain that every reader will make them out for himself.

S. RAMANATH AIYAR.

The Two Primary Requisites of Nation-building:

PATRIOTISM AND ORGANISATION.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE political *summum bonum* of India, whether it be absolute self-government or modified autonomy, can best be obtained only by a gradual evolution of such a government from the existing autocratic or bureaucratic form of the Indian Administration. Naturally therefore Indian Political Progress has to depend upon the harmonious co-operation of two elements, in the absence of either of which complete success therein need not be hoped for. They are (i) the *de facto* government and (ii) the people. Indeed these two elements are so largely and so minutely interconnected that it is almost impossible to conceive of either as existing and working in isolation. The cry of the extreme wing of Indian Political thinkers, who advocate self-help, to leave Government severely alone is accordingly a meaningless, not to say mischievous, one. Nor is the attitude of certain Anglo-Indians of the strident Imperialistic brand, who advocate 'martial Law and no damned nonsense' as if there were none on the other side to count with, less open to objection. Both extremes, as we have so often seen elsewhere, are at fault in that each has signally failed to take stock of the views and capabilities of the other.

Confining our remarks to the popular side alone, we have first to dispose of the objection that there should not be any co-operation of the people with the government. In settling this question, we shall have to take into account three classes representing three shades of political opinion: (i) the mendicants (ii) the moderate self-helpers and (iii) the militant self-helpers. While the first class depends solely on the government for the amelioration of its present condition and also for its ultimate political salvation, the third is determined to have none of it. What the one class seeks at the hands of the rulers, the other is bent upon spurning disdainfully and casting away as so much trash—in words if not in reality. The intermediate body of moderate self-helpers, who are fully alive to the value of self-help in the moral equipment of an individual and of a

nation, seek to supplement self-help by a judicious pursuit of external aid. In their view, a rational system of self-help does by no means preclude help from others. It is one thing to whine and beg for others' help where you can help yourself, and another to accept the good which is proffered voluntarily and which is moreover beyond your reach. If the one who depends solely on others deserves to be branded as a lazy scamp, the other who scornfully rejects the proffered good is little better than a demented cynic. The arguments, that are generally trotted out by the extreme self-helpers, are that acceptance of extraneous help is not conducive to the development of character and that it oftentimes leads to disappointment. Now, even development of character is a means to an end and not an end in itself; if development of character is to be got by the sacrifice of individual well-being and social progress, surely the game is not worth the candle. As for occasional disappointments, few can deny the melancholy fact that uncertainty is an inevitable shadow which dogs the footsteps of every human undertaking. Even the most assiduous pursuit of self-help will fail to get rid of this insistent factor. Further, the edifice of extreme self-help rests on the assumption that co-operation is a lower phase of social existence which is in fact the very opposite of truth. That, which distinguishes the savage, the semi-savage, and the civilized types of humanity, is the utter want of co-operation in the first, co-operation for hostile purposes alone in the second, and co-operation for the cultivation of peaceful arts and industries in the third. Taking the foregoing facts into consideration, we have no hesitation in saying that the only rational method is the method of co-operation with the government in the introduction and working out of such reforms as tend towards national progress, aye even towards administrative improvement.

If, however, by co-operation with the government the people and their leaders really intend shirking off their paramount duty of building up the national fabric on secure and solid foundations then such a co-operation would be anything but a blessing in the long run. If, further, such a co-operation were with a government pledged to the eternal degradation of the subject population committed to its charge it would amount to a crime from the very start. But is the British Indian Government, taken as a whole and in the main, so selfish

and so shortsighted as to hold India's all-round degradation as the ideal to be attained? Who could ever lay at its door such a political blindness, such a stupendous folly? Selfishness in certain branches of public policy and shortsightedness in a few isolated cases are things quite compatible with the beneficent character of the work of evolving order out of chaos which the British Indian Government has been doing in our midst. It is on the anvil of such a foreign Government that the Indian Nation is being hammered and welded into soliditary and shape. Let us, therefore, instead of simply cavilling at this or that defect in the existing system turn our attention to a question of the supremest moment, the question of nation building, in which each individual, even the meanest, has his allotted task to perform.

The various nations of the world, which have emerged from primitive barbarism into the political state may be seen to fall under three well-defined groups: (1) Rigorous Despotism, where the ruler or rulers care for their own interests merely, (ii) Parental or Beneficent Despotism, where the ruler or rulers for the most part identify their interests with those of the people and (iii) Constitutional Government, where the people are the real rulers by the virtue of imposing a constitution on the nominal ruling body. The first is the lowest, the second, the middling, the third, the highest form of Government yet evolved by man. The third is the highest group because in comparison with the other two, it is more *progressive* and more *stable*. It is highly instructive to see, in this connection, how political stationariness and instability have been brought about in the case of the first two groups and also to inquire what steps we shall have to take to get rid of these signs of political nonage or it may be the fore-runners of political decadence. Glancing at the three groups, once again, we come to understand that *Patriotism* and *Organisation* are entirely absent in the first group, are present only in a rudimentary form in the second, and are in a most developed condition and in full working order in the third. The natural tie of race, language and religion is the only tie which binds the members into a political society in the first, the 'political instinct,' the 'sense of political rights and responsibilities,' the 'sense of co-operation for political purposes', the 'sense of public duty', the

'feeling of duty towards the state', the 'national feeling', the 'love of one's country', 'patriotism'—for all these terms signify the same thing—being entirely absent in them. Wanting the political sense of co-operation and the opportunity for its exercise which they cannot expect at the hands of a despotic ruler, they naturally lacked political organisation of any sort in their midst. In the second group, however, in addition to the natural bonds of union mentioned above, we have the sense of common glory and common danger—a nascent political sense—which drives the people to identify themselves with the fortunes of their beneficent rulers and brings about their combination at least for offensive and defensive purposes though not for guiding the internal administration of the state in the right channel. Consequently, their political organization too is of the most imperfect order, having very little to do with the every-day administration of the state except paying taxes and making prayers for the redress of grievances. In the third group, the individuals, in spite of distinctions of race, language or religion, are held together by a keener sense of political duty and political right, a sense which gets strengthened day by day, by constant exercise. Such exercise of political rights necessarily generates political organizations of an elaborate kind, which in turn safe-guard those political rights. The decreasing scale of political stationariness and political instability as we advance from the lowest to the highest group has been clearly due to the increasing incidence of the subjective cause, Patriotism, and of the objective cause, Organisation. The fulness of corporate life or life as a nation can be attained only by Patriotism, a sense of public duty which places the interests of the individual after the interests of the nation, and by Organisation, which sets the individuals in definite places carrying with them definite rights and responsibilities. The one supplies the motive power and the other, the instrument, whereby alone can the end of fulness of national life be attained sooner or later.

That these are the two primary requisites of Nation-building may also be inferred from the familiar, even trite, analogy between the individual organism and the social organism so well illustrated by many a political philosopher and sociologist. In the individual organism, the cell-life is subordinated to and merged in the corporate life.

Each cell contributes its quota to the general life and itself thrives on such a contribution. If it turns out injurious to corporate life, or in some instances even useless, it is thrust out of the colony of cells called an organism and replaced by other cells more fit for the work. From this biological fact we may infer the sociological truth that individuals who go to form a political society are each one of them bound not only to look after their own safety and welfare but also to ensure the safety and welfare of the society to which they belong. More than this, each individual will feel convinced by an impartial study of the conditions of human happiness that ultimately individual well-being hinges upon social well-being and an intelligent pursuit of the former presupposes a consideration for the latter, in the absence of which the other is bound to become a wild goose chase or worse still, a following of Will o' the Wisp. Again, in the individual organism, we see advancing differentiation of functions has necessitated a concomitant differentiation of organs of increasing complexity and these organs are connected with one another by a closer bond of union than mere local propinquity. Homogeneous structures are gradually replaced by heterogeneous ones and this heterogeneity instead of destroying the connection amongst the various component parts has only added to its strength and intimacy. In like manner, in the social organism too, more complex organisations should be taken as betokening completer life and furthering the stability and progress of it as a whole.

Having thus seen that the inductive generalisation previously arrived at by a comparison of human societies receives a deductive confirmation from the laws of life and conditions of organic existence it remains for us to apply it in the case of India. It is needless to observe, we think, that India of to-day, India under the British sway, comes under the second group of benevolent despotism. It is vastly superior to the kind of despotism wielded by the Muhammadan rulers; but falls, of course, very much short of the ideal of Constitutional Government. The duty which devolves upon the rulers and the ruled alike is just to assist at the birth of such a Constitutional Government, in this ancient land. Manifold experiments have been tried, through many long centuries and by different hands and yet in not one of them did they succeed in evolving a Constitutional

Government in India. Possibly it is because of this very isolation of the people from Government, that Governments have come and gone in quick succession "leaving not a wrack behind" to bear their melancholy message to later generations. The finger of Destiny, which has hitherto propelled India through Political vicissitudes of bewildering variety, must continue to propell it further till it reaches a condition of political existence wherein progress and stability would equally be ensured. It would not do to talk as though constitutional Government would not strike root in the Asiatic soil. That would be arrogating to oneself a power greater than Nature's to understand Nature's capacity and incapacity. Moreover, events too of recent Asiatic History have proved the utter baselessness of such *a priori* assumptions. Leaving that apart, we have to consider how far the general body of the Indian Nation possesses these indispensable virtues of patriotism and organisation and how far it brings them to bear on all public questions of national importance. We shall reserve such consideration for a subsequent paper.

Reviews and Notices.

Sundari: An Indian story in four chapters by Mr. T. S. Rama Sastri, printed by Messrs. Srinivasa Varadachari & Co., Mount Road, Madras and published by Mr. N. Narasimham, Book-seller and Stationer, Central Depot, Berhampore. Price As. 2.

Mr. T. S. Rama Sastri needs no introduction to the readers of this Review. In this short novelette he has depicted the conflict between the old and new ideals of Indian social life, Sundari, the heroine, standing as a type of new womanhood and Krishnan, her lover being "one of those perverted orthodox persons who failed to march with the times." At first we fail to see what reason Sundari, 'the clever girl' 'the envy of her companions' 'the cynosure of all the promenaders of the beach' could have had to fix her affections upon one who had nothing but contempt for her except the old one of "Love is blind and lovers cannot see." But Krishnan makes ample amends, for the scorn in which he held the 'charming young woman' for her "native christian" dress and "anglicised manners," by marrying her—a poor forlorn orphan and widow,—after his return from England. He, the full-blown barrister, becomes an out-and out anglicised man himself so much so that "many took him actually to be a sun-burnt European from his dress, speech and manners." Indeed the dashing manner in which he proposes to marry the meek Sundari leaves her but one answer. She interposes:—"But I am poor. And we shall be doing something unusual by marrying each other" "Ah, devil take people and what they say!" cried Krishnan. "We shall be husband and wife and there is nothing wrong in that."

"Be it so" murmured the girl.

"Godward Ho!" (compiled from Annie Besant and Herbert Spencer) By Mr. N. K. Ramaswami Aiya, B. A., B. L., F. T. S Printed by Messrs. V. Govindon and Brothers at Shri Vidya Vinodini Press, Tanjore. Price two annas or two pence.

Under the above heading N. K. Ramasswami Aiya, B. A., B. L., F. T. S., High Court Vakil and Member, Advaita Sabha, Tanjore & Rationalist Press Association, London has published his last work which he says in his preface is the net result of his comparative

study of Science, Philosophy and Religion from 1880 up to date *i. e.* for a period of nearly 30-years. The present work contains 300 pages divided into 3 parts. Part I. deals with (1) Science, Philosophy and Religion (2) Evolution and Involution (3) Astronomy (4) Geology (5) Biology (6) Psychology (7) Sociology (8) Ethics (9) Universe ultimately resolvable into Matter and Energy (10) Matter and Energy inseparable (11) Indestructibility of Matter and Energy (12) Homogeneity of Matter and correlation of forces (13) How energy affects Matter (14) Matter and Energy ultimately indistinguishable (15) Spirit and Matter, the aspects of the one absolute Reality and (16) Brain waves and Human Personality. The contents of Part II are (17) The world's Religions (18) Theosophy, the common basis of Religions (19) Hinduism (20) Vedanta, the Philosophy of the Upanishads (21) Brahman (22) Ishvara (23) Jivatmas (24) Wheel of Births and Deaths (25) Exoteric cult (26) Yoga (27) Bhagavadgita, a Yoga Shastra (28) Yoga of Unity (29) Three-fold Yoga (30) Jnana Yoga (31) Bhakti Yoga (32) Karma Yoga (33) Nature of Yoga (34) Yoga as science and (35) Yoga as practice. Part III is devoted to (36) Religion, Sociology and Politics. The first part is compiled from Hudson's "Introduction to Herbert Spencer's Philosophy" and from the author's article on the "Religion of Science" published in the "East and West" (Bombay, India), February 1909, which is almost a copy of a pamphlet that he sent to Herbert Spencer just before his death and with reference to which he wrote to the author that he was glad to find a philosophy in India akin to his own. In that book the author compared Herbert Spencer's Religio—Scientific Philosophy of Monism with the Advaita Vedanta of Shri Shankara and the Theosophy of Annie Besant. The second Part of the present work is compiled from Annie Besant's Lectures on "Four great Religions" "Religious Problem in India," "Upanishads." "Bhagavad Gita" and "Yoga." The Third part is compiled from her Lectures on Theosophy in relation to Human Life." The conclusion of the author is that one who adopting the Philosophy of Science accepts Theosophy-the Religion of Science as the best working hypothesis and tries to realize in life the Unity of all by constantly meditatng on and Practising it (the pranava Aum, the best symbol of the One Unmanifest Absolute Reality, may be well used for the purpose. A, which represents the

first sound symbolizing matter, U, which represents the middle sound, symbolizing spirit and M, which represents the last sound, symbolizing the mainfested God, whose two inseparable aspects are spirit and matter) is in the words of Edger surely on the spiritual path, for sal ation depends not on the externals but on the internals of Religion, though form is necessary for those who are not strong enough to retain the spirit. The author interprets A U M to mean May we realize the Unity of All and Vande Mataram to mean Hail! Mother-Earth! May we thy children realize our Brotherhood. The book is priced purposely low at two Annas or two Pence a copy (postage extra) so that it may be within the reach of all. Copies can be had from the author or from the publishers, Messrs. V. Govindan & Brothers, Shri Vidya Vinodini Press, Tanjore. (Madras. India).

The Tenth Annual Report (1908) of the Rationalist Press Association, Limited, London.

Dr. G. N. Roy of Rajamundry, the local Secretary of the Rationalist Press Association, has kindly favoured us with a copy of the Annual Report of that body for the year 1908. It is a very interesting document and shows what solid results the well-directed enthusiasm of a few thinkers could achieve in the by no means popular field of Rationalism. The objects of the R. P. A. should in themselves secure for it wider patronage and more substantial sympathy from among the intellectual classes of society than is now the case and they are in the words of the leaflet "to stimulate freedom of thought and inquiry in reference to religious beliefs and practices, to encourage popular interest in the physical sciences and the various branches of criticism and philosophy, as connected factors in progressive human culture which has no need of supernaturalistic assumptions, to re-issue, in cheap and convenient form, standard or notable books of a scientific critical, ethical or philosophical character, to assist in issuing the works of authors whose heterodoxy places them at a disadvantage in approaching the ordinary publishing firms, to promote a secular and ethical system of education the main object of which shall be to cultivate in the young moral and intellectual fitness for social and civic life, and to assist unifying human thought on the basis of experience logically analysed, and generally to assert the supremacy of

reason as the natural and necessary means to all such knowledge as man can achieve." Very few we think except mystics and those who have lost faith in human reason will fail to subscribe to these laudable objects. The progress of the Association during the past year measured by the increase of its members and o its funds is a very encouraging feature, so many as 350 having joined the Society as members or as non-member subscribers. Turning to the publications we see that in addition to the numerous six-penny reprints and pamphlets nearly half a dozen original works have been brought out among which the *Life and Letters of George Jacob Holyoake* by Mr. Joseph McCabe deserves prominent mention. The platform Propaganda too seems to have received some, though not adequate, attention during the year, Mr. Joseph McCabe, Mrs. H. Bradlaugh Bonner and Mr. J. M. Robertson being the only speakers who have assisted the Society in this direction. The slender work turned out in this line is not however due to any lack of exertions on the part of the Association, but to "the great difficulty in obtaining speakers to meet Rationalists on the platform." This indeed is significant. It indicates to some extent the utter heplessness of those who relinquish reason and rely on a fancied faculty of higher validity to help them in searching after truth in any branch of human inquiry.

The Tamilian Antiquary, No. 3. *Some Mile-stones in the History of Tamil Literature or the Age of Tirujnana Sambandha, by the late Prof. P. Sundaram Pillai, M. A., with an introduction by Rai Bahadur V. Venkkayya, M. A., Published by the T. A: Society*. Price As. 8.

We have to thank the Tamilian Archæological Society for bringing out a reprint of Prof. Sundaram Pillai's *Some Mile-stones in the History of Tamil Literature.* The work itself dealing with an important epoch in the history of the Tamils deserves to pass through many more editions and that in a cheaper form. Add to this the interesting and convincing manner in which the late Professor has presented his facts and figures for the determination of the age of one of the most prominent characters in the religious history of Southern India, the utility of the republication is indeed indisputable. The charge has been levelled, many a time and oft, against the Indian intellect, that it is utterly lacking in Historic instinct and that it is fitter by natural bent to lose itself in pure speculation than

to plod along in the dry-as-dust investigation of natural facts. Whatever be the truth underlying such a charge as regards ancient India, that it has little application to Indian intellects trained in the methods we associate with the higher branches of English education, is more than evidenced by the work before us. Herein we have a striking example of an Indian Scholar coming out successful in a controversy in which he has been pitted against one of the most renowned of Western Orientalists: Dr. Caldwell. Not only has Mr. Sundaram Pillai proved the utter untenability of Dr. Caldwell's hypothesis of assigning Jnana Sambandha to the closing years of the thirteenth century A. D., but has brought forward an array of facts from the Tamil Sacred Literature, Sanscrit Antiquity and Epigraphy to establish that the Tamil Saint lived and laboured in the early years of 7th Century of the Christian era. We cannot better close our remarks than by re-iterating the wish and the hope expressed by the author in the very last sentence of the work before us: "Not in vain, however, would this long and laboured essay prove, should the date which it has all along sought to establish, be found to offer a foothold for scaling yet higher in the neglected antiquities of an undeniably ancient and interesting people."